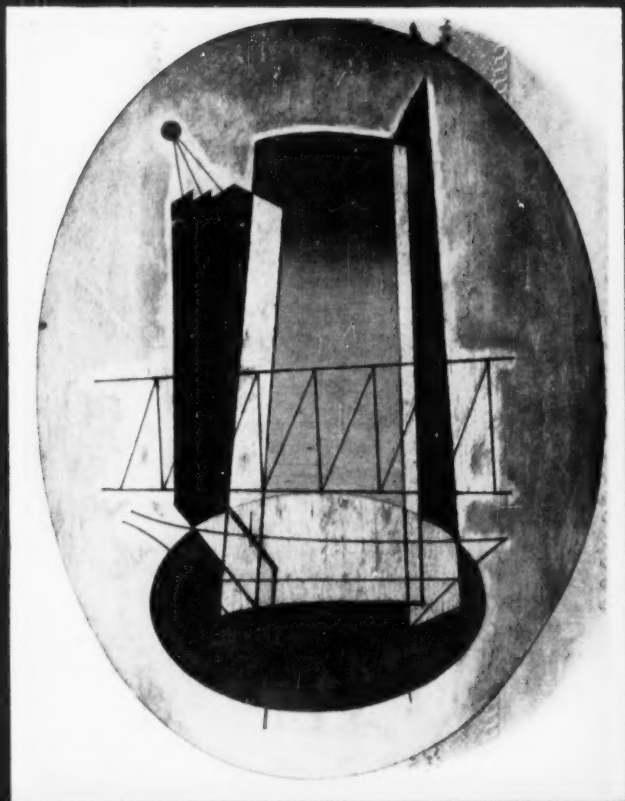


MAGAZINE OF ART



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MAX ERDREICH: EL GUECH AND HANNERSON

FREDERICK A. DEASANTIS: BOMBS ROCK DRAWINGS

JEAN CHARLOT: DRUGS IN ITALY

PAINTINGS BY JAMES BROOKS

NORRIS K. SMITH: DRAWINGS IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE

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ART AND/OR CULTURE

In an eloquent and witty article in a recent issue of *The Reporter* (November 25th, 1952), Sylvia Wright protests what she calls the "659-symphonic-groups" approach to American culture. This is the notion that the proud description of an ever-increasing audience for all the arts, backed with a full array of statistics ("by May 1951, there were 659 'symphonic groups'—including 52 professional, 343 community, 231 college, and a scattering of miscellaneous amateur groups"), will prove to "the outside world that we are a cultured people." On the contrary, says Miss Wright, this approach is self-conscious, timorous and entirely unconvincing:

"It is something new to describe a country's civilization in terms of the number of people engaged in cultural activities. I've never heard how many Elizabethans sang in amateur madrigal groups or put on experimental masques in small community theaters all over England. When I went to college, we learned about the great artists of the Elizabethan period. We did hear that Shakespeare always drew large audiences, but I don't remember figures on the study groups . . . who met to discuss the plays. . . .

"Propaganda writers are supposed to project American democracy, so perhaps it is natural that they should talk about the arts in terms of the largest group of people involved—the audience. But this is like talking about swimming the English Channel in terms of the number of minnows frightened by the swimmer. Art has nothing to do with large groups of people. It is lonely, ruthless, and ademocratic. We have a tradition that any American boy can be President. We should call a halt before we find ourselves believing that any American boy can be Hemingway. One is plenty. . . .

"Many critics have outlined the conditions under which art can and does blossom. Yet the arrival of an artist remains something unpredictable. He is an inexplicable and unexpected gift of God, a man of unusual talent and insight, of course, but, perhaps more important, of unusual energy, for this makes him able to carry through the most heartbreakingly difficult work in the world. Symphonic groups cannot distract him nor mass culture harm, for he is looking in another direction. . . .

"What the artist produces is particular to his time and place, and yet it is also what all the propaganda writers are looking for and wish were theirs, a true Esperanto. . . . From it the rest of the world will learn far more about the United States than from statistics about symphonic groups. Let us export our music, our painting, and our literature and forget about the advertising leaflets and preliminary selling copy. It is both logical and practical to do so, because, being international, our art is the most easily

exportable product we manufacture. The thread gauges of art are the same all over the world. Artists use only one system of measurement."

These are true words, and we applaud Miss Wright for having said them so forcefully.

In practice, they carry with them certain corollaries, which perhaps also require emphasis. When we do export our art, let us send it abroad as art, not as disguised statistics. In picking exhibitions from our past achievements, let us do so because we are proud of the works we have chosen, and not because they reflect some phase of our national development, some aspect of our social history, some interpretation of our climate or geography. Let us not, in other words, select examples of painting or sculpture simply because they seem to us to be peculiarly American. We need have no fear that anything done here will mistakenly seem to belong elsewhere; as Miss Wright says, "what the artist produces is particular to his time and place." In using quality alone as our standard, we will have given the best and clearest interpretation possible of ourselves, and though we imagined we were concerned with esthetics alone, we will in fact have produced a better impression of our non-esthetic selves (of our "culture," if you like) than we could ever have managed with the utmost guile.

The same holds true for contemporary art. Here too we must simply put our best foot forward. There is little point in trying to represent the total activity of our artists, or the response of their whole audience. Undoubtedly variety has its place as an indirect demonstration of the freedom of expression we accord the artist. But again this demonstration will be more impressive if it is shown through the single medium of the best possible examples. Certainly we need not worry if certain trends must be omitted because their top performance is not very good. Reflect for a moment on the numerically tiny band of painters that has carried abroad the prestige of the school of Paris, and how ignorant we are of the great mass of competent artists—even of the many who have deservedly considerable reputations at home—from which the few emerge and without whom they would probably not exist. Nor need we be afraid of extremes. The foreign observer is hardly looking for a mere variation on the familiar; he will only say of it (how many times have we heard this), that his own native artists know how to do the same thing better. If we try to prove that we do after all belong to the mainstream, we are guilty again of that kind of self-conscious, worrying provincialism of which Miss Wright complains. Bold statements will be welcomed; and paradoxically they will appear less bold abroad, divested of their surroundings, than they do to us in the familiar context of their domestic setting.

R.G.

Jean Charlot



DIEGO RIVERA IN ITALY

UNTIL 1920, Diego Rivera was a bonafide member of the School of Paris, consciously lost in estoteric pursuits that held more than a touch of plastic alchemy. His return to Mexico, late in 1921, marks the beginnings of his present fame as a leading muralist, painting for the people at large. What were the reasons that brought about this sudden change of heart and radical change of style?

Rivera left Mexico in 1908 at the age of twenty-two, returning briefly in 1910, only long enough to hold there a one-man show. In 1920, if Mexicans thought about him at all, it was as an expatriate. Writing of the work of Saturnino Herran, a stay-at-home Mexican artist, the critic Manuel Toussaint stated:

"When he refused to leave his country, Herran made it impossible for Europe to tear apart from us his spirit and his art, as it had done with Zarraga, Diego Rivera, and many another artist who, though Mexican by birth, by fame and works is European."

Mexico's loss was Europe's gain. In his *L'Art vivant* (1920), the French critic André Salmon included Rivera—with reservations born of personal enmity—in the narrow circle of the Parisian group. There was even what amounted

to a consecration of this recognition, the publicity attendant on a mild esthetic scandal (in which the dealer Léonce Rosenberg also figured) that came to be known as "*Taffaire Rivera*."

Ramon de la Serna described the Mexican artist in Paris:

"In this studio hung with black curtains . . . Diego lived between colors and bottles of Vichy mineral water that he fed to his voracious liver. . . . With the coming of night, he would further his inventions by candlelight."

André Salmon went into details concerning one of these inventions:

"He had built a curious tool, a sort of articulated plane, like the one made of paper that engravers use to make their tracings. . . . Rivera even claimed to have found the true secret of the fourth dimension."

A co-worker with Rivera was Gino Severini, who in 1917 published in *Le Mercure de France* a summary of their joint experiments. It mentioned also the "curious tool" that Salmon attributed to Rivera, but claimed by Severini as his own:

Above: Diego Rivera, Cubist painting, c. 1916

"In my personal researches, I carried my experiments to the point of combining together planes made of paper and cardboard, which could be made to move by rotation and by translation. . . .

"To satisfy my curiosity I looked into qualitative geometry for the most evident demonstration of the fourth dimension. I knew beforehand, however, that geometry could do no more than strengthen convictions already arrived at in our group by common artistic intuition. . . .

"Placing oneself at the point of view of the physical sciences, it is possible to create a new world in a space of four or of n dimensions. Thus, a parallelism may be drawn between the phenomena existing in world 1 and those existing in world 2. Inventors (wireless telegraphy, etc.) proceed thus, and it is equally licit for the artist to do so.

"As the painter Rivera, following Poincaré, justly observed, 'A being living in a world with varied refractions, instead of homogeneous ones, would be bound to conceive of a fourth dimension.'

"This milieu with distinct refractions is realized in a picture if a multiplicity of pyramids replaces the single cone of Italian perspective. Such is the case with certain personal experiments made by Rivera, who sees in Poincaré's hypothesis a confirmation of some intuitions of Rembrandt, El Greco and Cézanne."

By 1920, in faraway Mexico, the military revolution begun in 1910 gave signs of cooling off, somewhat uncertainly, into a period of civic reconstruction. One of the young politicians violently risen to power, José Vasconcelos, Secretary of Education, now dreamt of a vast plan of cultural renaissance: music, poetry, architecture and mural painting were to be put at the service of the people at large. Vasconcelos' slogan, repeatedly expressed, was: "If genius has such an exalted standing, it is because of its capacity to serve the people best." To further his plans, the Secretary not only commissioned works from artists already in Mexico but zealously started a roundup of those who had strayed abroad. Rivera was among these.

From the correspondence now filed in the national archives, it appears that Rivera was loath to return to his *patria* without first having visited Italy. Vasconcelos, for his part, felt grave reservations as to the fitness of cubism as a means of edifying the masses; perhaps an Italian trip would prove a shock treatment to cure the painter of his prideful isolation.

In November, 1920, the Secretary wired Rivera a sum of two thousand pesos—then the equivalent of a thousand dollars—ostensibly for fulfilling a mission connected with a reform of art teaching. In practice, by mutual understanding, the money served to pay for the coveted Italian trip.

Doubtless Rivera had heard of the cultural slant of his patron in esthetic matters, and thus knew what to look for in Italy—some formula that would ease the transition from ivory tower to public walls, in preparation for the kind of job that he hoped awaited him on his return to Mexico. His conversion was genuine, at any rate, as his interest veered from occult experiments towards communal manifestations, so splendidly and publicly realized in ancient Italian towns. He described his reaction in a letter to the Secretary, dated January 13th, 1921, and posted from Venice:

"Thanks to this sum, I am now realizing that tour of Italy for which I so longed. . . . It would be superfluous to state of what crucial importance it is for everything that concerns my craft—but even I failed to realize in what measure, and how emphatically so. . . .

"Here one feels, sees, touches and apprehends how the diverse materials manipulated by the different crafts unite, collaborating with, merging within, and exalting each other; until they make of the whole—building or city—a sum total that is function and expression of life itself, a thing born of the soil, organically tied to life—the living life of today, and past and future—a thing lifted above all the factors dependent on time."

Some such feeling is reflected even in the hasty landscapes that Rivera sketched, perhaps from train windows: medieval towers, square and crenelated, soaring over vineyards and low walls, their tops level with those of the rounded hills; cypresses and towers—nature and architecture—grown together in geological compactness.

Early Christian and Byzantine mosaics, in close interplay with architecture and outspoken in their public message, proved a corrective lesson that Rivera could never forget. In Ravenna, he sketched the processions of San Apollinare Nuovo and heads from the twin mosaics of Justinian and Theodora; he drew the outlines of the river god who witnesses the Baptism of Christ on the ceiling of the Arian Baptistery. An unidentified sketch stresses the theme of murals linked with architecture, and the relation of both these arts to life: men kneeling in prayer are seen against the backdrop of a mosaic saint, gigantic in scale, geometrized to blend with the surrounding architecture. Slight as was this scribble, the sensation it recorded proved a lasting one. *Creation*, the first mural that Rivera painted on his return to Mexico, followed to the letter the style and scale delineated in the sketch.

Rivera's conversion to muralism, experienced in the presence of Byzantine mosaics, had no need to take the form of a *mea culpa* for lost time. It was rather an overt expansion of what, as a cubist, he had discovered and experienced in secret. The same letter, quoted above, had this to say concerning his experimental Pa-



Left: Diego Rivera, Sketch of river god in Baptism of Christ, Early Christian mosaic, 6th c., Arian Baptistry, Ravenna (at right)

risian period:

"The little I did was always meant to be shared with all, even though it happened between the four walls of my studio and far away. . . .

"During all these years, all my efforts were bent on gathering all the data I could, up to the limit of my strength; so that, once back there with you and our people, I would attempt to make it work."

There is hindsight growing out of his Italian trip in this justification of his recent past, politically addressed to Vasconcelos; but it remains true that a passion for geometry stamped the ancient murals as forcefully as it informed the best of cubist works.

Rivera could feel at home in yet another period, as starkly intellectual as his own, when painters who were also geometers computed the laws of Italian perspective and defined the "divine proportion." In the proud words of the cubist Severini:

"Sympathy for science existed also in the times of Paolo Uccello, Andrea del Castagno, Domenico Veneziano, Luca Signorelli, Leonardo, etc. . . . These were realistic painters in the widest sense of the word, just as we are."

Indeed, in Florence, Rivera drew an intense set of sketches after Uccello's *Rout of San Romano*. Stressing the fan-spreads of ruled lines, he exaggerated the artificiality of horses and armor to such a degree that they seem to become the cogs and pistons of Rivera's own machine age. Intent on muralism, he must have longed to know how the Uffizi panel, together with the

companion pieces in London and Paris, blended with each other and with the lost architecture for which they were originally planned.

Rivera's Parisian experiments spectacularly touched on the topic of a fourth dimension; but also, more sedately, on the problem of illusion in depth and its proper degree of relationship to the flatness of the canvas. It was with iconoclastic gusto that the impressionists had collapsed the backdrop used by classical masters to dam in the pictorial space. In turn the cubists—Rivera included—questioned the impressionists' spatial nonchalance, eschewed its doubtful freedom and returned to the older concept of a measurable space.

As Rivera began to think in terms of murals, additional problems were raised that cubism had as yet had little occasion to meet. These were concerned with the tying together of the picture and the surrounding architecture—the ordering of illusionistic painted space to fit the inner space of the sustaining building. The Mexican looked to the old masters for a key to the solution. This uneasy intercourse between the two-dimensional and the three-dimensional elements made Rivera forget for a while his search for a fourth dimension; but the system of analysis that this search had bred, based on the translation of lines and the rotation of planes, proved as fruitful when applied to the Italian masters as it had already in the case of "Rembrandt, El Greco and Cézanne."

Even though Mantegna was omitted from Severini's list of precursors of cubism, his steel-hard compositional solutions, passion for perspective riddles and impersonal goals sought by his strong personality could easily qualify. Rivera's



Stefano da Zevio (?), *Madonna with St. Catherine in a Rose Garden*, c. 1425-35, tempera, 50 1/4 x 37 1/2", Museo Civico, Verona



Diego Rivera, Sketch after painting by Stefano da Zevio

sketch after Mantegna recalls the murals at Padua with the hallucinatory bulk of their Roman architecture—perhaps, more specifically, the *Baptism of Hermogenes*.

Rivera noted on this sketch:

"Construction where the actual partitioning of the surface follows guidelines relating to depth; thus creating a surface harmony shot through in make-believe style by the architecture. The frightening relief does not violate the surface."

In Verona, Rivera called "magnificent" Bonsignori's *Madonna*, steeped in Mantegna's spirit. In Rivera's sketch, the Infant Christ, sterner than in Bonsignori's painting, lies forlornly on the slablike cube of cubism and reveals even more clearly than does the painting its indirect prototype, Mantegna's *Dead Christ*—its drawing cruelly foreshortened on the esthetic rack of scientific perspective.

It was also in Verona that Rivera studied Stefano da Zevio's *Virgin and St. Catherine in a Rose Garden*. He skilfully isolated the geometrical backbone of the delightful *hortus conclusus*, dividing the surface into halves and quarters, with diagonals abutting the golden sections. The basic heptagon is apprehended more readily in

the sketch than in the picture, where it is overgrown with quaint accessories that seem to turn the initial scheme in depth into a millefleurs tapestry.

Writing as always in French, all over the remainder of the sheet, up and down and sideways, Rivera managed a word picture of the tender epidermis he had so ruthlessly skinned off his drawing:

"Excellent surface composition. Birds the size of angels, angels the size of live birds. St. Catherine seemingly feeds a bird while receiving from an angel the palm of martyrdom.

"Angels' heads are as big as are the roses in the mystical rosebush of Stefano da Verona.

"The Virgin and Child. All is gold outside of paradise. Within, all idea of optical scale is destroyed and all is in the spiritual order. It is extremely truthful and gentle."

Here was a new, or rather a forgotten kind of fourth dimension, different from the cubist one. Rivera could not remain insensitive to its spiritual depth, even though its extent was not to be measured by rotating or sliding the parts of a cardboard device.

A thirty-five degree tipping of the upper left corner of the picture, sliding around the

golden section, was Rivera's way of expressing the dynamics of an unidentified Giovanni Caroto. The note scribbled in the margin of the sketch is partly autobiographical:

"Surface composition with golden section, the half and the square of the picture.

"Mediocre painter. Construction depending too much on figures inscribed with too many foreshortenings and accidental postures in depth, stressing surface lines.

"Try to avoid this defect; danger for myself."

Problems of technique and color at times took precedence over those of composition. In Venice at the Scuola di San Rocco, Rivera puzzled, pencil in hand, over a fragment of a frieze by Tintoretto. Off-size and folded back high on

the wall where the mural canvas belonged, this fragment had been recovered intact in 1905, unvarnished and apparently unfinished. Maurice Denis had already lucidly written in 1910:

"In it were apples painted in a pale green and bright red on a ground of Veronese-green leaves. *It is all color.* One would call it a Cézanne. Perhaps it lacks the finishing touch of umber that would have sobered it, but, such as it is, that precious fragment indicates in Tintoretto an effort at chromatism altogether similar to that which I have explained in Cézanne."

Rivera wrote in turn:

"It seems as if one is looking at a thing of *père Cézanne*, painted in casein. The grain of the canvas is much in evidence and one feels



Above: Tintoretto, Fragment of Sala dell'Albergo ceiling decoration, 1565-67, oil, Scuola di San Rocco, Venice; below: Diego Rivera, Sketch after Tintoretto's ceiling decoration





Left: Tintoretto, *Three Graces and Mercury*, 1578, oil, 57 1/2 x 61", Doge's Palace, Venice



how the brush, agile and hurried, acts with the rather liquid pigment.

"There is no varnish whatsoever. Perhaps the coat of varnish was added after the canvas

was put up in position? Perhaps one worked slightly with glazes in the fresh varnish to harmonize once the thing was done?"

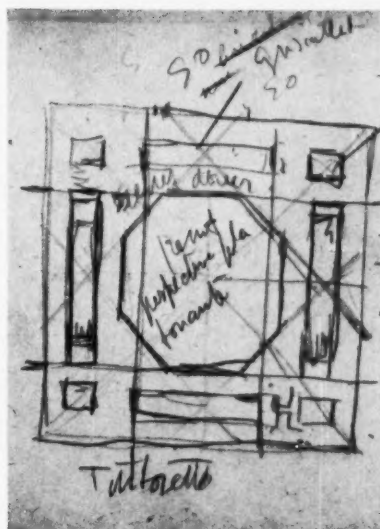
Notes on color are scattered over the drawing: "Earth-red with accent of pure vermillion. Orpiment yellow. Cold neutral tone. Green warm and transparent. Blue-gray identical to that of *père Cézanne*."

This Mexican, thinking aloud in Venice, jotted down his thoughts in French. Gallic habits showed more deeply than in the language alone. The whole glorious *décor* of San Rocco with its painted giants twisted in holy and violent actions was gently outweighed for Rivera, as it had been before him for Denis, by three apples, Cézanne-touched.

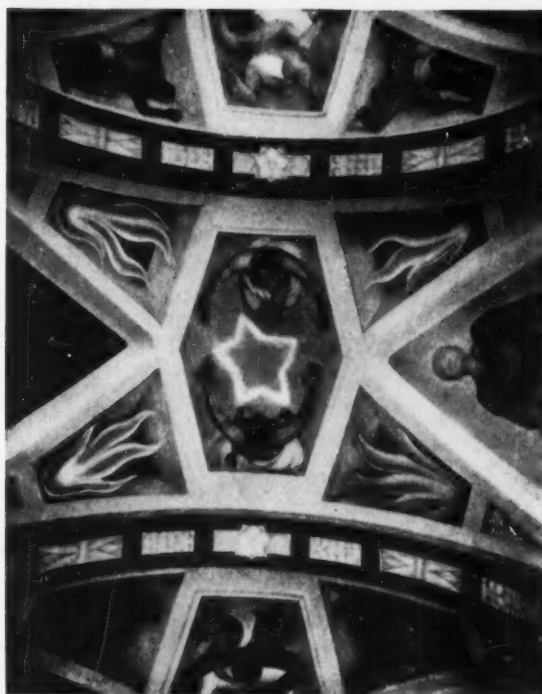
In the Doge's Palace in the same city, Rivera sketched Tintoretto's *Three Graces and Mercury*. He felt at ease while ruling the diagonals that divide the surface area of the picture into quarters—more so than when rendering the spiraling depth, with its streaks of chiaroscuro disembodied from actual plastic form. He noted: "Quite close to a window. A picture in which the composition is arrived at by color, determined by the effect and dynamism of the physical light."

A point that Vasconcelos, in his desire to lure back the artist, had perhaps failed to make clear was that the Mexican art renaissance was launched practically minus a budget. Rivera dreamt active dreams under the baroque ceilings of the Doge's Palace, jotting down blueprints and recipes that in time to come could help enhance

Right: Tintoretto, Allegory: Justice and Venice offering Sword and Scales to the Doge Girolamo Priuli, c. 1559-60, Doge's Palace, Venice. Below: Diego Rivera, Sketch after Tintoretto's Allegory



Diego Rivera,
Detail of ceiling, Chapel, Chapingo, 1923-27



his own mural paintings with sculptured panelings and embossed gilded reliefs. He noted of the *Sala delle Quattro Porte*: "Ceiling by Tintoretto. Architectural scheme by Palladio. Color alternating cools and warms"; and of the *Allegory with Doge Girolamo Priuli* and attendant panels: "Pictures in frontal perspective with very low horizon. The imitation bas-reliefs in monochrome painted in very warm tones."

That the artist was not craning his neck in idle awe of the unattainable is proved by his very practical sketch of a mural scaffold:

"A scaffold for working on ceilings, very simple to move by sliding it over planks greased with lard, slipped under the front legs raised by means of wooden screw-levers.

"To apply the canvas to the ceiling it is raised from the ground in this way, after having fixed the suspending screws in place very exactly by trial with the stretcher alone. The scaffold is put back in place after that."

Back in Mexico, Rivera was to manage to put to use his splendid Venetian experience—with simpler accessories and cheaper materials, it is true—in the partitions that artfully divide the ceiling of the chapel at Chapingo.

In Chapingo, Rivera embodied still another Italian memory—Sienese this time—when he painted two panels on the contrasting themes of good and bad government, in homage to the Lorenzettis, the first muralists to deal openly with political themes.

The long-range significance of the Italian trip turns on the artist's disaffection from the esoteric in favor of a means more suited to painting on public walls. The Italian sketches prove how reluctant Rivera was to move towards a representational painting style, how he clung instead to geometry as the one safe common denominator between his work and that of the old masters. The contemporary esthetic etiquette of Paris decreed that story-telling was unbecom-

ing in art; thus conditioned, Rivera's thought habits automatically played down the rich subject matter found in Italian masters and shied away from the human moods inescapably attached. He understood, however, how a dramatic change of approach was implied if he was ever to become painter for the people at large. Notes that the artist himself dictated on his stylistic evolution, after his return to Paris from Italy and just before his departure for Mexico, show this awareness:

"1914-1915: deductive cubism.

"1915-1917: transition cubism.

"1917-1920: comes close to Cézanne and Renoir.

"1920-1921: trip to Italy; a new tendency, to humanize."

As the careful wording implies, this humanization was as yet only a tendency. Even later, back in Mexico once more, Rivera's first mural, Byzantine in style and content, was thus planned so as to postpone for a while longer the unavoidable conversion to realism.

There was, however, another facet to Rivera's work, perhaps begun as a form of relaxation from the abstruse research cited by Severini. In Paris, Rivera had drawn a series of heads keenly observed—*The Nun, The Laborer, The Widow, The Bureaucrat, The Boss*—with a touch of nineteenth-century humor à la Grandville or à la Cham. On the Italian trip, he also made a few sketches in this realistic vein, such as one of a female addict giving herself a hypodermic. In a similar strain Rivera was to jot down on his arrival in Mexico market scenes and provincial types. Even before the completion of his neo-Byzantine mural, these notes after things seen eased the way towards the long-delayed change of style.

Not until 1923, in the frescoes for the Ministry of Education, did Rivera combine his abstract computations with realistic observations in an openly dialectical style.

Diego Rivera,
Sketch of Italian street scene, pencil



Note: The sketches by Rivera illustrating this article were done during his trip to Italy, 1920-21. All photographs are reproduced courtesy of the Honolulu Academy of Arts.

INDIAN ROCK DRAWINGS

Frederick R. Pleasants

THE richness, variety and vitality of art expression in aboriginal North and South America is nowhere more eloquently illustrated than by the Indian petroglyphs and pictographs that are scattered over the country from California to Maine. The exhibition of "Indian Rock Drawings," on view through Jan. 11th at the Brooklyn Museum, presents one group of petroglyphs found in the mountains of the Galisteo Basin area near Santa Fe, New Mexico, where they were faithfully copied and measured by Miss Agnes Sims.

The accompanying illustrations show the range of subject and style: from realistic representation of the human figure to abstract geometric drawings. Most realistic is the picture of the sacred animal, probably a mountain lion, from Comanche Gap, but the buffalo and deer are also realistic in treatment. Most abstract is the drawing from north of San Cristobal which shows supernaturals, handprints and birds—probably the unrelated work of various artists.

These petroglyphs are made by pecking on the basaltic rock with a sharp hammerlike stone. Since the rock is hard, this is an extremely laborious process, and the technical obstacles

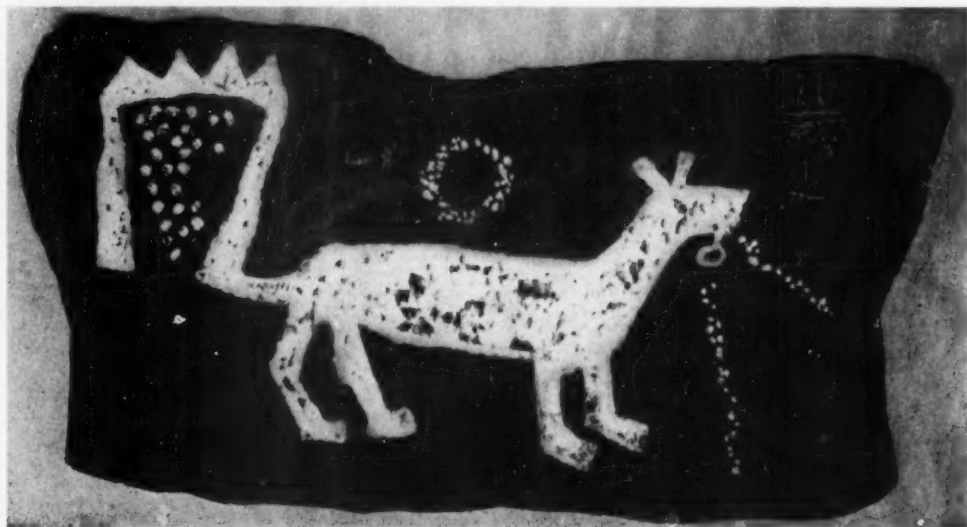
have affected the style. Physical details are simplified wherever possible, and religious attributes are also treated in a summary fashion.

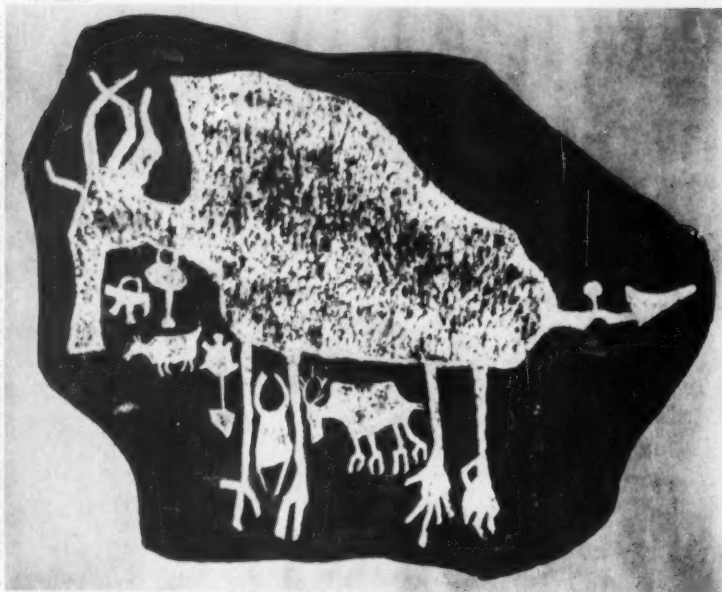
Certain artistic conventions characteristic of primitive art are usually observed. The figures are shown in full face or profile view with little use of a three-quarter pose. On the other hand proportions correspond with unusual accuracy to the actual anatomical ones.

Though there is very little formal organization into elaborate perspective scenes, there is wider variety of subject matter than in the better known paleolithic cave drawings; more species of animals are represented, and vegetables—notably corn—are also depicted.

Nothing certain is known of the use of American Indian petroglyphs, but there are certain resemblances in subject matter between the petroglyphs and known Zuñi and Hopi gods such as the war god, the mudhead and others. Parallels of this kind become clear when a kachina is juxtaposed to a petroglyph showing the same subject. Their original makers are also unknown but few archeologists would place them before the Christian era.

Mountain Lion, Comanche Gap, near Galisteo, New Mexico. 3' 6" wide. The tail of this sacred animal has been carved into a rain-cloud symbol from which fall drops of rain. The circle over his back probably represents the sun. The dots coming from his mouth symbolize the breath or magic power of the animal. Similar dotted symbols of magic force appear in the painted murals excavated in one of the kivas or ceremonial chambers in the ruined pueblo of Kuana near Bernillillo, N. M.





Rock Carving, Bocas de Cenato (near Cienega) New Mexico. 4' 6" wide. The large stylized animal is probably intended to represent a buffalo. However, each of the four feet has been given a different form; in front are a bird's claw and the split hoof of either deer or buffalo, while one of the hind feet resembles a human hand. Two of the small animals are deer. The other figures have not been identified. The whole was probably executed as a form of magic, meant to insure success in the hunt.





Rock Carving, Galisteo Dike, New Mexico. 4' wide. The figure at the left possibly represents a man of the lizard clan. From his arms grow various plant forms which resemble human hands. To the right upon a rainbow sits a bird with a zigzag water symbol hanging from his tail. Carvings very similar in style to this appear at Mesa Verde.

Kachina doll from Zuñi representing Earth and Sky, collection Austin Ladd, Coolidge, N. M. (from Museum of Modern Art, Indian Art of the United States, 1941).



Rock Carving (left), San Cristobal, New Mexico. 6' high. A six-foot section of the many carvings found on the rocky sandstone escarpment to the north of San Cristobal Pueblo. It shows masks of various supernaturals, hand prints, horned serpents, birds, etc. The figures appear to bear no relation to one another; they were probably the work of different artists and pecked over a period of years.

Max Dvorak
EL GRECO AND MANNERISM



El Greco, Burial of Count Orgaz, 1586, oil, 189 x 141 3/4", Church of St. Thomas, Toledo

Translator's Note: Max Dvorak (1874-1921), professor of the history of art at the University of Vienna, exerted a wide influence through his many pupils and his books. *Ueber Greco und den Manierismus*, given as a public lecture in October, 1920, was published posthumously in his *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte* (1928). Dvorak was among the earliest, if not the first, to insist that a stylistic definition of that phase lying between the high renaissance and baroque was necessary. Although the concept of mannerism is more precise than it was in his time, and is now commonly accepted, the very sweep of his formulations still makes them stimulating.

I wish to thank Professor Jakob Rosenberg of Harvard University for his kindness in reading the manuscript. I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude to Professor Sydney Freedberg of Wellesley College who checked the translation, prevented several errors and contributed many helpful suggestions. For reasons of space limitations, about a thousand words have here been eliminated from the original; all deletions are indicated by ellipsis marks. John Coolidge, Fogg Art Museum

EL GRECO's reputation among his Spanish contemporaries was based on a painting in the Church of St. Thomas at Toledo, the *Burial of Count Orgaz*. A stone plaque under the picture explains what it represents. Don Gonzalo, Count of Orgaz and Procurator of Castille, had been a benefactor of this church where he expected to be interred. At the very moment the priests were preparing him for the tomb—wonder of wonders!—St. Stephen and St. Augustine descended from heaven and buried him with their own hands.

El Greco has represented this legend in a remarkable way. The painting consists of two parts: below, the burial, and above the reception into heaven. The lower part is likewise divided in two, a ceremony and a miracle. The ceremony is shown with Spanish dignity and at the same time a literalism that recalls contemporary Dutch masters. The corpse, clad in armor, lies on a bier, while at the right a priest reads the prayers for the dead in devout concentration. At the corresponding place on the left a monk silently contemplates the deceased as if he would bid him farewell. Between these two corner figures the mourners—the flower of the Toledan aristocracy—are arranged like a frieze in an unbroken row. In their black suits and white ruffs these *hidalgos* are grave and attentive, like the figures in a Dutch portrait group. Yet individuality of likeness is played down in favor of uniformity of expression. There is something hard and at the same time fanatic about the faces. They suggest ascetic self-discipline, an inherited system of values and minds which can comprehend things that the eyes cannot see and the hands cannot touch.

Apart from the ceremony, and unsuspected by most of the company, something is going on. Two messengers from heaven undertake to bury the earthly frame of this true servant of the Church. Above, freed from that earthly frame and ringed by an ethereal vision of clouds and

insubstantial figures, the Count is solemnly received by Christ and the Virgin. Two participants in the ceremony see what the rest know nothing about—the priest in a white surplice on the right who glances upward in the greatest astonishment, and the boy on the left in the foreground. He looks out of the picture and points at the two saints with his left hand, as if he would call the spectator's attention to the miracle. Thus there is a heart filled with faith; there is the soul of a child, not yet closed off by the poison of doubt and still aware of the miracles of this world. Finally, there is the spectator whom art shall exalt to a purely spiritual realm.

That defines the significance of this remarkable picture. El Greco sets forth, as if in an elaborate floral display, everything that made the painting of his day famous. Here is the skilful composition of the Roman School, the Venetian command of color, the portraiture of the Netherlands. Who else since Titian's death could represent rich vestments with the bravura shown in the two saints? Who else since Tintoretto could catch with such mastery the fleeting quality of a vision? Who since Michelangelo could solve the most difficult compositional problems with such boldness? Yet there is more to the picture. Beyond the bounds of mere earthly beauty, truth and accuracy, it makes manifest the miraculous and the spiritual.

Where does the scene take place? Unless we knew, we could hardly guess. By night, and apparently in the church—of which, however, we see nothing. Ever since Giotto, a sure organization of forms in space had been the fixed basis of all pictorial representation. This has now disappeared. Is the room wide or deep? One does not know. The figures are herded together as if the artist had fitted them clumsily into the space. But at the same time the flickering light and the painter's sense of the supernatural open out limitless expanses above.

The fundamental idea of the composition

is old and simple; preceding artists had used it hundreds of times in representing the Assumption. Yet how its character has changed! Since the frame cuts off the figures in the foreground, no ground line is visible, and the forms seem to grow upwards in some magic way. That is the prelude to exaltation, which still has to overcome some opposition in the lower register. But the rising movement bursts like flames through the isocephalism of the row of mourners. In the blaze of light above, El Greco both follows and denies the traditional symmetrical arrangement. Hitherto, in scenes that show a ceremonial reception into heaven, the composition had served to give pictorial expression to a certain rhythm—a rhythm of things deployed with architectural regularity. El Greco takes this meaning away from it. A different rhythm appears; nothing is quite vertical. The clouds and the floating figures are not organized according to a system based on the laws of gravity and the overcoming of those laws. The apotheosis is informed with a dreamlike, unreal existence which follows only the painter's inspiration. This applies not only to the composition but also to the individual shapes and to the colors. Both surpass normal observation and do not try to reproduce what appears to the eye. They resemble a feverish vision in which the spirit frees itself from earthly bonds to lose itself in an astral, supernatural and super-rational world.

With some justification his contemporaries in Toledo called El Greco the seer of spirits. "He was crazy," says the present-day custodian who takes visitors to look at the picture. More politely expressed ("a noble mind but unhinged"), the same judgment has persisted until very recent times. . . . We must concern ourselves with this crazy man, not in order to defend him (that is no longer necessary), but in order to come closer to the sources of his remarkable art.

As is well known, Domenico Theotocopuli was a Greek from Crete, which at that time was ruled by Venice. Like many of his countrymen, he too was educated in the city of lagoons. He was trained in the workshop of Titian, then almost ninety years old. Here he became familiar with Titian's great experience of the phenomena of color and how to reproduce them impressionistically. He was influenced likewise by the aged Bassano, the painter of sharp contrasts of light and dark, as well as by Veronese, the master of delicate silvery tones. But all this left him unsatisfied. At that time Italian art had reached a turning point in its development. A wholly new spiritual impulse had taken hold of it, an impulse originating in Rome but affecting even the younger Venetian painters. So in 1570 we find El Greco in the Eternal City, where he had come with letters of introduction to Giulio Clovio, the miniature painter. Then the trail is lost till 1577, when he appears in Toledo, painting pictures which aside from their technical mastery have

scarcely anything in common with the works of his Venetian youth. El Greco is a new man. He had experienced in the interim what was in those days described as a conversion. Such a spiritual rebirth is the key to a great master. It raised him to the eminence he holds for us today, so we must search out its every root. . . .

We must therefore turn our attention to Michelangelo. The greatest figure of the century, he, more than anyone else, was destined to anticipate the spirit of the coming generation. As an old man Michelangelo created works of art which, like El Greco's painting, have up to now lain beyond the limit of critical comprehension. Judged by naturalistic standards, they have frequently been considered unfinished works or a sign of senility. To this group belong the *Pietà* of the Palazzo Rondanini, the *Deposition* in the Cathedral at Florence and the drawings of the human figure from the master's last period. To it belongs also a series of studies for a *Crucifixion* which can tell us about Michelangelo's ultimate artistic beliefs and his legacy. High renaissance art was essentially pagan, and during that period this subject had gone completely out of fashion. What does it mean when the time-honored, pathetic theme reappears in the work of the aged Michelangelo? Presumably he wished to study again the representation of the nude—a study which for more than one hundred and fifty years had been the principal source of artistic progress in Italy. Yet how these "nudes" differ from everything the Italians had hitherto understood by the term, including Michelangelo's own earlier work! . . .

From Giotto on, art had more and more been thought to be a matter of skilful composition and dramatic treatment, forms filled with natural vitality, drawn with conviction and effectively related to one another spatially, physically and psychologically. All these ideals, which reached their climax in Michelangelo's early work, have disappeared in the late studies for the *Crucifixion*. Medieval sculpture or painting come to mind. Here is a simple triad, three bulky, unarticulated figures. They are almost formless, if one considers what had hitherto been understood as form, when the point of departure had been to reproduce the material substance of the outer world. Certainly Michelangelo no longer achieves that ideal. Now the figures are blockish. They are amorphous masses as indifferent in themselves as stones by the roadside, yet vibrant throughout, volcanic, filled with a sense of tragedy that flows from the innermost depths of the soul. To him who has grasped this, earlier representations of the *Crucifixion* seem insipid and superficial. For here the source of the tragedy is not something external, to be explained by mechanics; it is an inner experience. The mystery of that death which sets men free has



Michelangelo, Rondanini Pietà, 1555-64,
marble, height 78", Municipality of Milan



Michelangelo, Crucifixion, c. 1560 (?), pencil
and chalk, 15 x 8 1/4", Royal Library, Windsor



Michelangelo, Pietà, 1498,
marble, height 68 1/2", St. Peter's, Rome

brought upon the artist an inner upheaval. His intention is to give expression to that upheaval and to build the figures, not from the outside inwards, but from the inside outwards, as if the body were possessed by the spirit. . . .

Or take the Rondanini *Pietà*. Far more than the experiences of a lifetime—one of the richest lives an artist ever lived—separates the *Pietà* of his old age from the *Pietà* of his youth. The things he had valued most highly when young came to seem worthless. Now the wonderful curving construction has disappeared; the masterly pulling together of the figures into a group seems meaningless, as does that treatment of the surface where Michelangelo for once had surpassed the ancients. Here is a dead mass, hanging loosely down, without any attempt at individualization or bodily idealization. Yet it is a moving elegy. Never before was the dead Christ so affecting, never was grief shown with such gloom or weighing so heavily upon the human spirit.

Thus at the end of his life Michelangelo turned away from a style that was concerned with the imitation and formal idealization of nature. He rejected the objective renaissance view of the world, considering that the emotions and experiences of the soul were more important for art than faithfulness to sense perceptions. His work became unnaturalistic. In terms of all history this was nothing new, for if we scan the whole course of art, we find that unnaturalistic periods are commoner and last longer than periods of naturalism. Even in the latter an unrealistic undercurrent persists as a legacy from earlier epochs. Ages of naturalism appear almost like islands in a great current of thought which considers the representation of inner emotions more important than truth to nature. And yet it seems inconceivable that at the close of his career Michelangelo should have turned away from his personal style, and from a style by which his native land had achieved an outstanding position in the world. Moreover, he turned back to the anti-naturalistic attitude towards art, which had been the attitude of the Christian middle ages.

This change depended first of all on his spiritual development. In middle life he had a godlike command over everything that could be founded upon the renaissance view of art. He pushed the solutions of its fundamental problems as far as was possible, and, like the impressionists during the last century, he reached limits that might not be exceeded. A nature as deep as Michelangelo's could not remain unaware of this. One could not express everything that moved mankind merely by perfecting and intensifying material form; the attempt to do so had miscarried, as Michelangelo was able to declare in works such as the *Last Judgment*. Hence even the renaissance's naive, antique, happy affirmation of the world gave him no pleasure. Following

the general trends of his time, his deep and meditative spirit turned back to the most profound questions of existence. For what does man live? What relation is there between transitory, earthly and material values and those which are eternal, spiritual and immaterial? . . .

I have treated Michelangelo at length because in his own career he completed a course of development that the art and culture of the time likewise pursued. It is not, as the nineteenth century believed, the masses who set the character of evolution and determine material and spiritual culture; it is the spiritual leaders. For El Greco's generation, as for our own, the Sistine ceiling, the Medici Chapel, and the *Last Judgment* constituted a reservoir of artistic forms. Yet the impulse that was decisive for Italian art of the second half of the century proceeded from those last works of Michelangelo discussed above.

A second great artist can show us this, an artist who was likewise decisive for El Greco's further development. This was Tintoretto. He, too, had gone through a spiritual rebirth, and during exactly the same seven years as the Toledan master. People call it the transition from his golden style to his green style and do not rack their brains about what that transition means. Tintoretto's early pictures rival Titian's in their splendor of color. This is replaced by a gray-green, an Ash-Wednesday tonality, from which a few hues shine forth like incandescent flowers. The meaning of the innovation is clear. Venetian painting had stood for the richest possible development of the sensual appeal of natural colors. Tintoretto substituted for these a ghostly play of fantasy. Smoky masses of color, lightning flashes of color, reflect subjective, spiritual states that have nothing to do with observation or reproduction of actual appearances.

More than color is at stake, however. In a picture like the *Brazen Serpent* the composition is curiously wrenched; the forms are bent and stretched without regard for normal poses or natural spatial disposition; they are interwoven according to the secret laws of a passionate pathos. One sees a Witches' Sabbath of wildly twisted bodies and lines. Shapes flash out of the darkness as if the figures had been dismembered. A will-o'-the-wisp light whisks over all things as though they were spooks.

Again, the *Ascension of Christ* is a vision. In earlier representations of that event the central feature had been the landscape with the apostles scattered about it. Here, all but the Evangelist have been cast out, thrust into the background. Reality has become unreal; the only reality is that which realizes itself in the brain of one man. He had been reading apart from the others; now, the vision wells up in his mind. Christ rising to heaven is neither far nor near, neither palpably flying upwards nor an optical



Tintoretto, *Ascension*, 1576-81,
oil, 212 x 128", Scuola di San Rocco, Venice

illusion. He is a mental apparition which has nothing to do with natural laws and to which, in turn, nothing is actual. Light and shade as they affect clouds, movement and colors do not perform their normal function. As so often in El Greco, light and shade are not opposites but are jointly the means by which dreamlike images are expressed. . . .

From Michelangelo, El Greco adopted anti-natural form; from Tintoretto he took anti-natural color and composition. Nevertheless, both together do not suffice to explain his Toledan style completely. We must proceed further and speak of a general process, whose center lay not in Italy but north of the Alps. "*Nescio. At nescio quid?*" To know what you don't know—the famous phrase of the Jesuit Sanchez in his work on ultimate and general knowledge—best characterizes the situation. In Northern Europe, especially in Germany, a ferment had been working since the beginning of the sixteenth century. . . . This movement led, of course, to the reformation. But anybody with a subtle intellect soon found that the reformation was an unhappy compromise. It sought to harmonize the mysteries revealed by

religion with rationality in thought and life. The new concept of good works resulted, however, in lives based on public success and personal gain. Worldliness, banished from the church, was taken up by the state and adopted by everybody in private. These were changes for the worse.

Disillusionment with the reformation led to skepticism and doubt as to the value of rational thinking and rational codes of behavior. It led likewise to a consciousness of the insufficiency of the intellect and a realization of the relativity of all knowledge. One can talk of a spiritual catastrophe spreading from political life. Whether secular or religious, the old systems and categories of thought collapsed, as did the old dogmas concerning knowledge and art. The change, observable in Michelangelo and Tintoretto within the limited field of art, is a criterion for the whole period. The paths that had led to knowledge and to the building up of spiritual culture were lost. The result seemed to be chaos, just as our own time seems chaotic to us.

In the field of art this phenomenon is called mannerism. Mannerism is not a defined period but a continuing movement, whose beginnings go back to the opening of the sixteenth century. . . . When a view of the world like that current in the late middle ages, the renaissance and the reformation collapses, there must be ruins. Artists, like an increasing number of people in all intellectual fields, lost the support of general maxims to which they could attach their zeal, their ambitions and their little ideas. The spectacle of an unprecedented disturbance confronts us. In diverse ways and by a motley mixture of old and new, philosophers, writers, scholars and statesmen as well as artists tried to find new underpinnings and new objectives. Artists, for example, sought these in virtuosity or in that new formal abstraction summarized in the teachings and theories of the Academies. On the other hand, a new emphasis was placed on subject matter. At times this was of the coarsest, at other times literary and highly sophisticated. Subject matter expanded on all sides as the artists felt obliged to emphasize the subjectivity and originality of their attitude towards the world.

From this general ferment two trends gradually emerged which were of the greatest significance for the future. Both were based on the urge to enrich man's life and to solve his problems through psychological knowledge.

One trend proceeded towards that goal by considering the conditions of life as well as those preconceptions of the communal and of the individual psyche which determine it. This realistic and inductive trend is common to Rabelais, Breughel, Callot, Shakespeare and Grimmelshausen. In succeeding centuries it was to grow increasingly preponderant, until it reached its climax in nineteenth-century realistic literature from Balzac to Dostoevski.



Germain Pilon, Jean de Morville, 1577, bronze, height 27 1/2", Musée des Beaux Arts, Orléans

Jacques Bellange, Three Maries at the Tomb, early 17th c., etching, 17 1/2 x 11 3/8", Metropolitan Museum of Art



The second trend was deductive. Its sources were feelings and perceptions through which alone certainty and elevation were sought. This trend (expressing itself principally in religion) centered in Catholic countries, notably France and Spain. Strange though it seems, Luther's tremendous attempt to take religion into the realm of meditation and of inner experience had a deeper influence in those lands than it did in Protestant countries. In the latter, the attempt remained tied to an official church. Catholicism rejected this union. Because of that, in spheres of activity where the old church raised no objections, religious awareness could develop all the more intensely.

These spheres were first and foremost private devotion, meditation and emotional exaltation. For these processes of inner awareness, the second half of the sixteenth century was a kind of spring. They blossomed forth, particularly in France and Spain. In French literature their finest flower was the *Philothea* of François de Sales. This work combines wisdom as regards the conduct of life with the most delicate psychological advice as to how one can develop within one's self the peace of God, and how one can orient one's spiritual life towards eternal values. Lastly it shows how one can achieve intensity of perception in one's daily life. Montaigne, a good judge in such matters, considered that this kind of intensity had richly compensated contemporary Catholicism for its losses. When later on it was taken over by secular thought, it became the most important source for all modern poetry of sentiment down to *Werther* and *Childe Harold*.

The new spirituality also affected the visual arts, as the works of the little-known French mannerists show. Artists like Dubois, Freminet, the sculptor Germain Pilon, the painter Toussaint du Breuil, or the engraver Jacques Bellange are related to the school of Fontainebleau, and in particular to Primaticcio. They created works whose frank and lively spirituality of expression had been unknown in art since the imperial portraits of the third and fourth centuries. For example, in Pilon's bust of Jean de Morville the physical appearance is but a mirror image of the fire raging within. El Greco some years later conceived his own self-portrait in the same way.

Alternately these French mannerists drew forms and scenes which seem like illustrations for the *Philothea*. Bellange's *Three Maries at the Tomb* is an example, particularly the Madonna. She is absorbed in spiritual concentration on the sweet sight of a miracle. "The world is no more mine, and I myself am no more mine, and only that which lives in my heart is truth and happiness"; these words were said of that very episode. The long, slender figures with their small, gracefully bent heads, their sweet expressions and their nervous hands turn up again in El Greco. What

is more, the fact that the whole manner of presentation is used to express beauty of soul proves that he knew the work of the French mannerists. He took from them what the Italians could not provide—the idea that through emotion one might completely overcome this world. That was the great inheritance of Northern Christianity in the middle ages.

The French must have led El Greco . . . to Spain. . . . Two traits were characteristic of leading Spanish mystics: the study of self and an ability completely to transcend in their thinking and feeling those limits which naturalistic presuppositions had established "What I see," said St. Theresa, "is a white and red that cannot be found anywhere in nature, which give forth a brighter and more radiant light than anything man can see, and pictures such as no painter has yet painted, whose models are nowhere to be found, yet they are nature herself and life itself and the most glorious beauty man can conceive."

El Greco sought to paint the kind of things the saint beheld in her ecstasy, to paint them not as if he had attached himself to her, but from an identical point of view. For both, subjective experience had become the sole law of spiritual uplift. . . . Even before El Greco, Michelangelo's mannerism had been combined with Spanish exaltation, as can be seen in a *Pietà* by Luis Morales, El Greco's predecessor in Toledo. Works like this, at once melancholy and tragic, certainly influenced El Greco. But even more he was influenced by the whole spiritual atmosphere. This made possible the utmost exploitation of all those elements of the new art of expression that he had taken over from Italy and France. It also led him completely to subordinate actual models in favor of his artistic inspiration. . . .

El Greco often painted portraits in which the sitters look like brothers. Because he views them from a higher point of vantage, all men are more or less alike—masks and phantoms. At the same time there are also portraits which can only be described as tragic, the Grand Inquisitor Cardinal Niño de Guevara for instance. In the presence of this picture, who would not think of the Grand Inquisitor, the visionary figure in *The Brothers Karamazov*? The hunched-up body, the cold, piercing glance represent no particular man, but fate itself.

Above all, El Greco tells the stories of the Bible. Sometimes he paints fables, as in the *Gethsemane*, which can be described as a fairy-tale in color. . . . In most cases, however, it is the visionary character that dominates, as in the *Resurrection*. . . . Even more striking is the *Opening of the Fifth Seal*. The prophet sees the day of wrath breaking; he sees the souls of the martyrs crying aloud for vengeance, he sees those who are worthy of the word of God receiving their white garments. At the left foreground the Evan-

gelist kneels with outstretched hands; behind, angels bring raiment to the risen. They are portrayed in various poses, some of which are derived from late drawings by Michelangelo. One imagines John to be standing. A colossal figure compared to the others, he looks not back but on high. Mightily moved, he sees things undreamed of, things at which the figures behind him can only hint. His form is more dynamic than anything hitherto known in art. It represents the solution of a problem which till this moment must have seemed insoluble: a solid block which has become pure spirit.

And finally, a landscape, *Toledo in a Storm*. This is no portrait of a landscape. As by a flash of lightning a soul is laid bare before us, a soul carried away by the demoniac forces of nature and identifying its own mood with that of the grandiose display. This display reveals to it at a stroke the unreality of all earthly things and makes clear their metaphysical meaning.

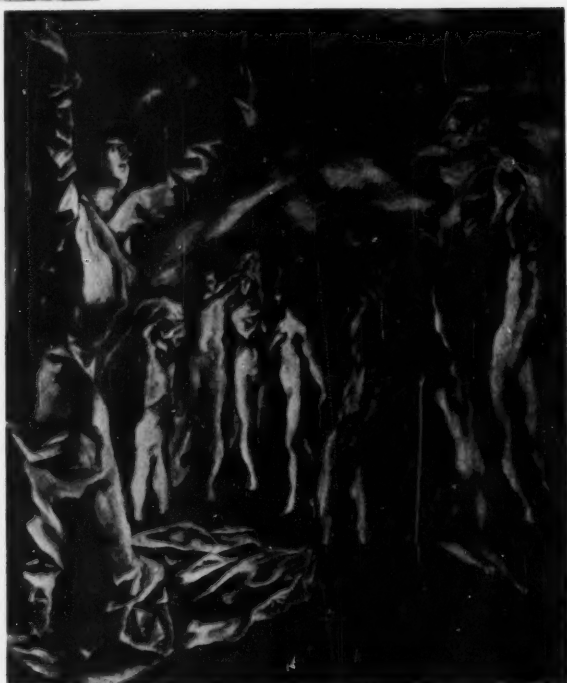
While El Greco was painting these pictures, the figure of Don Quixote, the pure idealist, was taking shape in the imagination of his Spanish contemporary Cervantes. Dostoevski considered Don Quixote the most beautiful character in all history, next to Christ. El Greco likewise was a pure idealist. His art was the climax of a movement, European in extent, whose aim was to replace the materialism of the renaissance with a spiritual orientation of the human soul. But this

Luis Morales, *Pietà*, c. 1575, Academia de Bellas Artes, Madrid





El Greco, Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane,
c. 1608-14, oil, 66 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 44 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
collection Baron André Herzog de Csele, Budapest



El Greco, Opening of the Fifth Seal,
c. 1610-14, oil, 88 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 76 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
collection Ignacio Zuloaga, Zumaya

movement proved to be only an episode. From the seventeenth century onwards the cultivation of worldly values began to gain the ascendancy. In their drive for supremacy even the Popes of the Counter-Reformation struck a compromise with such values. The painter of Toledo came to be thought mad, even as people forgot the heroism of Cervantes' central character and considered him a comic figure. One hardly needs to mention how El Greco necessarily fell more and more into oblivion during the next two centuries. They were an age when scientific knowledge was dominant—an age of mathematical thought, of superstitions concerning causality, of technical progress; an age when civilization became me-

chanized. Culture was of the eye and of the brain, not of the heart. . . .

Today, as in the middle ages and in the period of mannerism, literature and art have turned once more to those absolutes of the spirit that do not depend on faithfulness to sense perception. In that interrelationship of all experiences which is the secret law of man's fate, everything seems to point towards a new spiritual and anti-materialistic epoch. In the eternal struggle between matter and spirit, the balance inclines towards the victory of spirit. Thanks to this turn in affairs, we can recognize El Greco as a great artist and a prophetic soul. His fame will shine brightly forth even into the future.



El Greco, *Resurrection*,
c. 1597-1604, oil, 108 1/4 x 50",
Prado, Madrid

JAMES BROOKS

JAMES BROOKS, born in St. Louis in 1906, grew up in Denver and Dallas. He came to New York, where he still lives, at nineteen and worked as a letterer to support his studies at the Art Students League. Like so many other artists of his generation he was with the W. P. A., one product being his well-known mural in the administration building at La Guardia Airport. From 1942 to 1945 Brooks was in the army. Since then he has taught at Columbia University and is now on the staff of Pratt Institute, where he teaches lettering. His painting, *M-1951*, shown here, given fifth prize at the 1952 Pittsburgh International, was the only American picture to win a jury award. He will have his fourth one-man show at the Peridot Gallery next month, from February 2nd to 28th.

Brooks's work belongs to that tendency in recent painting which, in spite of wide affinities elsewhere in this country and abroad, has become known as the "New York School." Black plays an important part in his compositions; blues, pinks and reds also appear. Each canvas concentrates upon a single color, and form and space relations are created by tonal variations of the one dominant hue.



*Tondo, 1951, oil,
diameter 7", photograph Oliver Baker,
courtesy Peridot Gallery*



No. 44, 1951, oil, 33 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 59",
 photograph Oliver Baker,
 courtesy Peridot Gallery



M-1951, 1951, oil, 79 x 54 $\frac{1}{2}$ ",
 courtesy Carnegie Institute,
 Pittsburgh, Penna.

MEANING IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE

Norris K. Smith

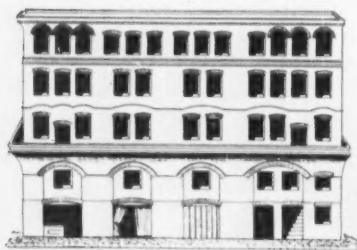
IN dealing with the architecture of the past we generally recognize, if only tacitly, a distinction between those works we regard as examples of high architectural art and those we place on some lower level and consider of little importance. The Parthenon and the Baths of Caracalla belong to the first class, the shops in the Athenian Agora and the apartment houses of Ostia to the second. Size and expense are not the key factors, however, for most persons will agree that despite its greater size and complexity, the Coliseum falls far below the level of the Pantheon as a work of art. The distinction is made rather on the basis of expressive content or meaning; for we conceive that the high art of any age, unlike its folk art and its utilitarian artifacts, embodies in visual symbols the insights and ideals of the men of that age, and something of their own evaluation of themselves and their experience.

When it comes to the architecture of our own day, however, no one seems interested in making such a distinction. The criteria by which modern structures are judged by critic and architect alike are applicable to all forms of building—to bridges as well as to churches. They have to do with economy of expression and honesty of

construction, with efficient performance and esthetic discipline. Modern architecture, it would seem, is thought of by and large as a sort of engineering in good taste. This is understandable enough, for most present-day commercial and industrial commissions are so circumscribed by considerations of efficiency, economy and specific use that their execution requires the services of an engineer rather than of an artist.

There are some commissions, however, that offer the architect an occasion for exercising high artistic imagination. As has been the case for hundreds of years, such opportunities are found most frequently in the building of churches and expensive private homes. In these undertakings the builder is called upon to create structures that are not merely useful and efficient, or simply handsome, but are also meaningful and moving. The modern architect has proved himself as capable as his medieval and renaissance predecessors in using these occasions for the creation of high art. But also like his predecessors, he has generally had little or nothing to say about the meaning of his symbols.

Such explanations can never be wholly satisfactory, since a translation from one mode of expression to another is peculiarly difficult. It is



"House of Diana" apartment, Ostia, Roman, 1st c. A.D. Right: facade; above: reconstruction (from Ernest Nash, *Roman Towns*, New York, 1944)



nevertheless possible for us to make certain interesting observations about the kind of object the modern architect characteristically chooses to create when he is allowed the greatest freedom from the exigencies of practical necessity.

Let us look first at two examples of modern domestic architecture—Neutra's House in the Desert and Wright's Falling Water. These are not typical modern houses; the best and most original work of an age is never typical. The principles of design developed in such houses as these, however, have been applied in innumerable lesser works and, if we are to judge by the popular architectural press, are being applied more and more widely as time goes on.

To begin with, it should be observed that these buildings have virtually no namable parts—not even of so general a nature as walls and windows. They are made up of assembled parts (unlike the pyramids, for example), but these parts are so formed that in most cases they lack the two prerequisites essential for verbal definition: delimitation and recurrence. From any one point of view it is impossible to determine the full size and shape of most of the units in the assemblage, and hardly any part or unit occurs more than once. It is a kind of architecture that, by its very nature, can never be described with a vocabulary of specific architectural terms.

One becomes aware of the full sense of this mode when comparing it with a very different one—for example, that of the Greek orders. In the Doric temple, every visible part has precise limits and a fixed name, is symmetrical, occurs repeatedly both in the single building and in every example of the type, and stands in an unvarying relationship with every other part. Each member is formed according to governing concepts of form and proportion, and each can be recognized and identified by name when taken out of its architectural context. To this extent the Greek temple is a counterpart or micro-



Frank Lloyd Wright, *Falling Water*, Bear Run, Penna., 1936-39, photograph Hedrich-Blessing



Richard J. Neutra, *House in the Desert*, Palm Springs, Calif., 1947, photograph Julius Shulman, courtesy Museum of Modern Art; above: plan



cosm of the Greeks' world—that is, a world made up of a great number of things, each of which has its own *phusis*, or inborn nature, and membership in a category of similar things having the same *phusis*. Although there were philosophers, such as Democritus and Heraclitus, who took exception to this view of the nature of things, it represents a longstanding tradition in Greek thought and was the basis for both Plato's concept of form and Aristotle's notions of substance and essence. The Greek orders reflect also that taste for finitude which Aristotle summed up when he declared: "The assumption that things are finite is always to be preferred, provided it can equally well explain the facts in question; for in the realm of nature we ought wherever possible to suppose the existence of what is finite and better, rather than of what is infinite and worse."

The formation of the parts of the modern building clearly reflects no such Hellenic preconceptions. In neither of these houses does one find parts that are recognizable out of their context. The nature of each part is determined neither by its possession of its own *phusis*, nor, in a simple or mechanical way, by the function it performs in the structure. It is determined rather by the requirements, both structural and esthetic, of a larger context—a context that so embraces and conditions the part that, within it, the part tends to lose its clear identity.

Again we find a very different relationship in the Greek temple, which is so conceived that the shape of the whole is as simple, as symmetrical and as clearly defined as the shapes of the twenty-odd kinds of part that are put together to make it up. The temple thus becomes a visual symbol of the Greeks' deep conviction that the universe is unified, rational and—like man himself—symmetrical.

In the modern building, however, the shape of the whole is far more elusive than that of the parts, all of which have an evident common quality of rectilinear simplicity. One easily perceives that either of the two houses cited here as examples is capable of presenting the observer with an almost unlimited variety of silhouettes, each of which constitutes a shape so complex and irregular as to be almost unintelligible. It is a shape that cannot readily be grasped, remembered and reproduced by the human intellect. Moreover, considering these houses as three-dimensional objects, one finds it uncommonly difficult to determine the limits of the building. Exterior and interior, horizontals and verticals, solids and voids are all so interpenetrated as to defy definition.

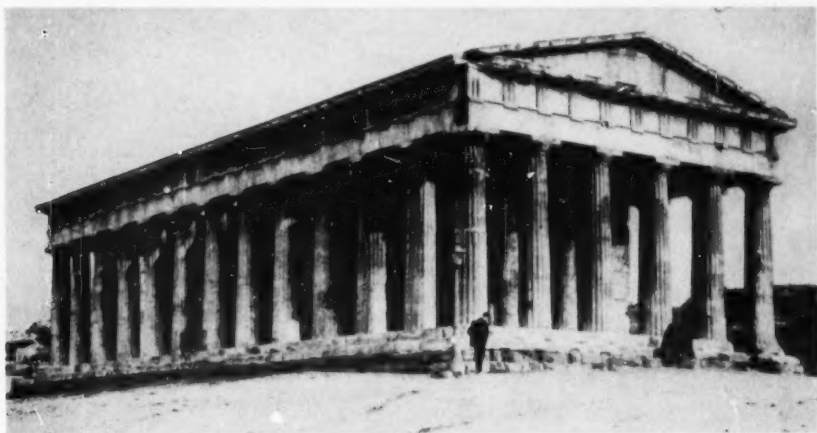
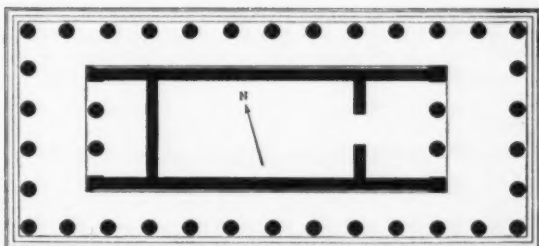
If we can see in the Greek temple a concrete symbol of certain deep-rooted ideals or convictions to which the Greeks were committed, so in like manner we can find meaningful parallels between the symbolism of modern architectural

expression and certain characteristic modern philosophical assertions about the nature of the world. Let us take first a statement by Bertrand Russell, which he makes, interestingly enough, in the course of criticizing the logic of Aristotle: "Substance," in fact, is merely a convenient way of collecting events into bundles. . . . Anyone can see . . . that such a word as 'France' (say) is only a linguistic convenience, and that there is not a *thing* called 'France' over and above its various parts. The same holds true of 'Mr. Smith'; it is a collective name for a number of occurrences. If we take it as anything more, it denotes something completely unknowable, and therefore not needed for the expression of what we know. . . . 'Substance,' in a word, is a metaphysical mistake." Now if we can describe the Parthenon as a substantial form made up of many lesser forms of the same order, can we not best describe these two modern houses as non-substantial collections of events, in which there exists no intelligible wholeness over and above the events themselves?

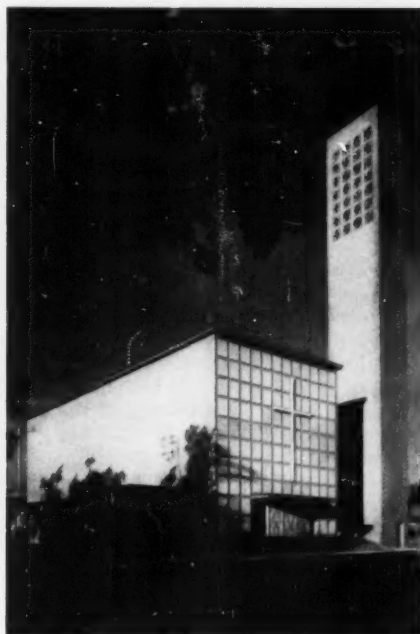
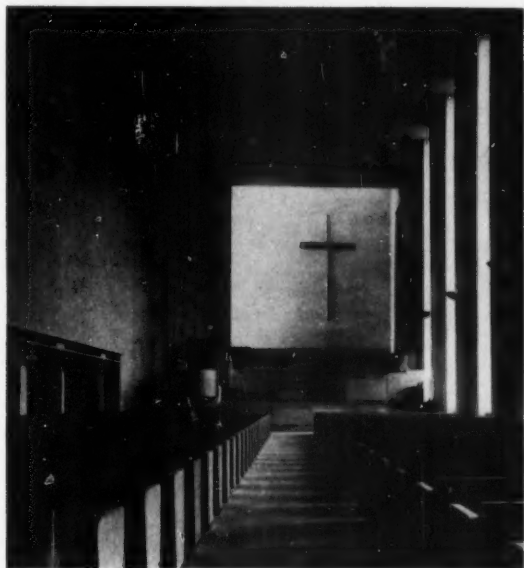
In Russell's statement there is set forth a view of the nature of reality, or of man's comprehension of it, that is widely held today. Turning to modern conceptions of the nature of man himself, we encounter similar formulations. The prevailing temper of much modern philosophy as it relates to man and his experience is especially well expressed in the writings of John Dewey. It is interesting, therefore, to read the following characterization of Dewey's thinking by another eminent philosopher, George Santayana: "In Dewey, as in current science and ethics, there is a pervasive quasi-Hegelian tendency to dissolve the individual into his social functions, as well as everything substantial and actual into something relative and transitional." Surely Santayana did not have modern architecture in mind when he made that statement; yet does not the difference between a modern house and an eighteenth-century one lie in just this distinction between what is relative and transitional, and what is actual and substantial? For the esthetic appeal of the new architecture lies not in the perception of a substantial entity having fixed limits and proportions, but rather in the appreciation of subtle interrelationships among open shapes, and in the varied and complex transitions that unite shape with shape, space with space, and shape and space with one another. Such transitions are found not only in the external design; they are equally important inside the building, where there is a characteristic fusion both of space units and of domestic functions, and where the activity area has supplanted the delimited room.

There are, of course, many currents in modern thought that are related to or have been involved in the formation of the convictions that are given expression in such modern buildings. Among these one would have to cite the Dar-

*Temple of Hephaistos, Athens, c. 449-44 B.C.;
below: view from northwest; right: plan (from
Isabel H. Grinnell, Greek Temples, New York,
1943)*



*Eliel and Eero Saarinen, Tabernacle Church of Christ, Columbus, Indiana,
1942; left: interior; right: exterior view of church and bell tower;
photographs Hedrich-Blessing, courtesy Museum of Modern Art*



winian conception of the active and determinative interrelationship of organism and environment; the anti-intellectualism of Bergson, with his assertion that "there are no things, only actions"; the philosophies of pragmatism, positivism and operationalism, which were developed at the end of the nineteenth century and have more recently been popularized by a number of prolific writers on semantics (especial mention should be made of the anti-Aristotelianism of Korzybski and his followers); and the pervasive awareness of the relativism of all human formulations and institutions—an outcome of the past century of historical and anthropological study.

In the light of all this, one finds new meaning in the modern architect's avowed concern with function, and in his inclination to regard function rather than form as the basic consideration in the determination of architectural design.

But now it may be objected that up to this point we have been comparing houses with temples. The objection is a fair one; the two kinds of building are not of the same order. Let us therefore turn our attention briefly to a modern church, taking as an example of good modern ecclesiastical design Saarinen's Tabernacle Church of Christ in Columbus, Indiana.

While the shape of this building as a whole is relatively conventional, one is struck immediately with the architect's painstaking avoidance of symmetry. This involves not only the radically different treatment of the two side walls and the asymmetrical placement of the lighting fixtures and the cross; it extends even to the design of the altar and of other small details of furniture and decoration. Now when symmetry is rejected by the designer of a school or of a hospital, it is generally justified on the grounds that the device is an arbitrary strait-jacket into which the building's various functions cannot or should not be forced; but when the builder of a rectangular basilican church rejects symmetry, we must take that rejection as a positive expression of some cogent idea.

In the past, symmetry has generally had at least two meanings. Partly it has been used to give buildings a form analogous to that of the human body, which is itself symmetrical along a vertical or longitudinal axis. The usage has implied that man exemplifies in his own being and in his rational mind a principle of order and intelligibility that is of some high or universal significance. In the history of Western civilization it is related to the recurrent philosophical theme of the analogy between the microcosm and the macrocosm, and to the age-old conviction that man is created in God's image, or the image of the gods.

The more obvious meaning of symmetry, however, lies in its unequivocal assertion that the whole is more than the sum of the parts, and

that wholeness requires that the parts be ordered and governed by an intelligible larger necessity that is independent of the parts themselves. The appropriateness of this mode of expression to the architecture of the religious and aristocratic cultures of the past can hardly be questioned, just as the appropriateness of the modern style to the expression of modern convictions is readily discernible. Some doubt may legitimately be felt, however, as to the fitness of the new architecture to the needs of the Christian church, which has not abandoned its view that man must submit himself to an all-embracing divinity which is wholly independent of mankind and of human creation.

If the traditional church may fairly be said to express an ideal of submission to a larger system of order, the modern building surely bears witness to the very widely held modern ideal of proper adjustment. Saarinen's church is made up of a great many elements which set forth among themselves a beautiful harmony of interrelationship. The axis of one part is never brought into alignment with, or submitted to, the axis of another part, nor is the axis of the nave as a whole clearly marked. If one part were altered or removed, a subtle readjustment would have to be made among all the others to compensate for the consequent shift of emphasis; but the removal of one part would not make the structure irremediably incomplete, as would the removal of a column from a Greek temple or an arm from the human body. The principle of order which governs the entire design is almost indefinable. It is a principle of harmony based not upon any demonstrable system of balances or of hierarchic gradations, as would have been the case in a medieval or renaissance church, but upon the most sensitively conceived adjustment among a great variety of elements. The building we see here presents in wonderfully appealing fashion the somewhat nebulous ideal of the well-adjusted man—the man who, being freed from the necessity of having to conform to a predetermined standard or pattern, achieves harmony and stability for himself by bringing all the economic, social and psychological factors that make up his world into a happy but flexible relationship with one another. The ethical ideals of an age were never better expressed.

The characteristics of modern building are not, then, simply inherent in the physical properties of concrete, steel and glass. If such were the case, we could not consider the new architecture as an art form at all. At its best, however, the modern style gives expression to certain far-reaching modern convictions about the nature of the world and of man, and about man's ethical and spiritual goals. It is because of this that buildings such as those we have been considering may justly be described as the high architectural art of our century.



Man Ray 1914, 1914, oil, 7 x 5",
collection Roland Penrose, London

MAN RAY AS PAINTER

Paul Wescher

"Art is a lie that makes us realize truth. The artist must know the manner whereby to convince others of the truthfulness of his lies." —PICASSO TO KAHNWEILER

PHOTOGRAPHY is not art," said Man Ray—and became one of the foremost modern photographers. But if you were to ask him, "Is painting art?" he would reply: "Is life art? Is anything art that is alive? Not the artist, but the public makes art." This attitude of the old dadaist has remained with Man Ray throughout his life.

Painting is a material thing, and since it no longer clings to optical or realistic illusion, it has become even more material. In former times painting was done only with brush or palette knife. Nowadays it is done with spray guns, or with housepainters' paint cans; it is printed, scratched, scraped, rubbed, mixed with sand or plaster and so forth. In his early days Man Ray experimented in all materials, yet his first love

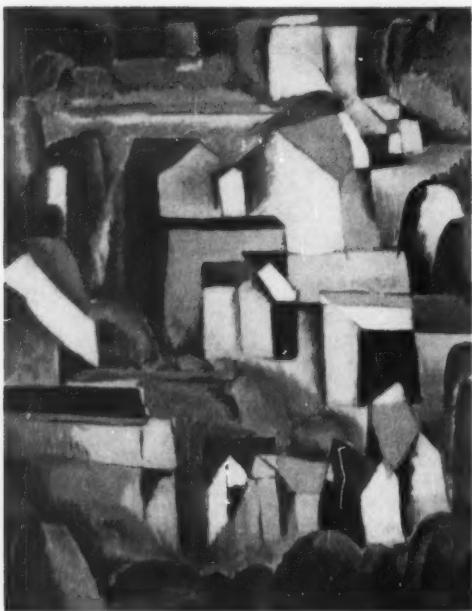
and belief is still painting plain and simple with a brush. He hates trickery, because a trick once discovered is pointless. Even in his photography he works with an old camera and the simplest equipment.

Mere technique has no value, for anyone can learn it. Art is all in the mind. When during the last war Man Ray showed his work at the Circle Gallery in Los Angeles, the catalogue title read: "Objects of my affection including related paintings, drawings, photographs, all designed to amuse, bewilder, annoy or inspire reflection, but not to arouse admiration for any technical excellence."

While the purists clarified the elements of painting, the dadaists restored the element of life. Cubism, the great innovator, was on the way to becoming academic, when dada gave a new incentive and new life to all modern art. We must always turn back to the second decade of this century in order to find the spiritual standards that still prevail. It was in this second decade that Man Ray (born in Pennsylvania in 1891) set out on his career as a painter.

When the Armory Show opened in 1913, Man Ray, then living in New York, had just arrived at his first solid experience and realization. As for most of the pioneers of our age, this experience was cubism. Something in the mental training of cubism gave painters a richness, a depth, a wisdom which they never lost, even if they later changed completely. The feeling of a new movement in space, out of the shadowbox; of the simultaneous aspects that multiplied the life of painting; of the structure of forms and the loose harmony of free lines and colors—nothing as thrilling had been offered to a young painter, and Man Ray grasped these possibilities with instinctive certainty and directness.

He had struggled the year before with expressionistic tendencies, for example in the picture that he called *Dream*. It represented a cobblestoned street at night, lit by a lantern, with boys or men moving in strange, detached attitudes. It was perhaps significant that the dream theme should occupy the young painter—the dream, the subconscious that later was to have such a share in the surrealist world of ideas. But apart from that it was not until the next step that Man Ray fully materialized a vision of his own, in a number of landscapes—the most primitive



The Village, 1913, oil, 16 x 20",
collection Albert Lewin, Beverly Hills, Calif.

form of landscapes—based on cubist inspiration.

The Armory Show brought to America paintings by Cézanne and by many of the cubists, though naturally artists had known them before through reproductions or single examples. In the landscapes painted by Man Ray in 1913-14, which bear titles like *Backyard*, *The Village*, *Ramapo Hills*, *The Town*, houses and hills, houses on hills, or merely houses or hills are amassed in abstract cube-like forms, organized and balanced in contrasting shades and colors. Arranged in a square geometrical system, they are in opposition to the more emotional and intricate motives of Delaunay or Gleizes and are best compared with Roger de la Fresnaye's paintings of these years (for example, *Conquest of the Air*). If the world is going to tumble, these works, exempt from the law of gravity, will still keep their balance. In their juggling with positive and negative, their firm and loose-knit structure, in the sensitivity of their colors, they already show so personal a note as to need no signature. Unaffected and simple, they stand out among the whole group of American cubist incunabula by Max Weber, Arthur Davies, Sheeler, Marin and others. In a painting composed of the numerals 1914 (the year of its origin) and the letters of his name, in cryptically lighted relief, Man Ray even foreshadowed the most modern trends of American painting.

It was in 1916 that a group of writers and artists founded dada. In historical perspective this movement already appears in a glorified light. Actually, the artistic ideas of dada formed

themselves slowly, bit by bit, as if arranged in a far-reaching magnetic field. Poets (Ball, Tzara, Huelsenbeck) dominated and directed the first spectacular manifestations in the "Cabaret Voltaire" in Zurich, with Jean Arp as the only artist among them. Cubist, futurist, expressionist pictures were indiscriminately mingled in their first exhibitions, organized to shock rather than to educate. Nobody could foretell at that moment in what direction anybody was going. "The dadaists are not the sons of the cubists," wrote Ribemont-Dessaigne in the *Little Review* in 1923. "Some among them dipped a finger into the bouillon cube and immediately put it in their mouths to see how it tasted."

Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia—whom Man Ray met in New York in 1915—had both dipped their fingers deeply into the cubist bouillon cube but had also produced works which displayed a dada spirit before the dada theory itself was in existence. Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* had baffled and awed visitors to the Armory Show, not so much because of its forms (which with the touch of the flickering movies hardly differed from futurist paintings), but more because of its title which, borrowed from anecdotic painting, was definitely blasphemous and sacrilegious. While the futurists, infatuated with the machine, regarded the subject of the nude as outworn and demanded its official suppression for ten years, Duchamp, always acting "against the grain," conceived his nudes as machines. In his *Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors* (1912) and *Coffee Mill* (1911) Duchamp made it clear very early that he was not taken in by the dynamic life that fascinated the futurists.

The discovery of the "ready-made" as a controversial and poetic object initiated and completed another favored device of later dada and surrealist evolution. Man Ray had once studied industrial design (something which, like tattooing, leaves its mark forever) and soon he joined Duchamp and Picabia in twisting the twisted machinery till it performed a new kind of action. Radical to the core, Duchamp, Picabia and Man Ray already sensed the dangers of a mechanized world at a time when such a world was still universally admired.

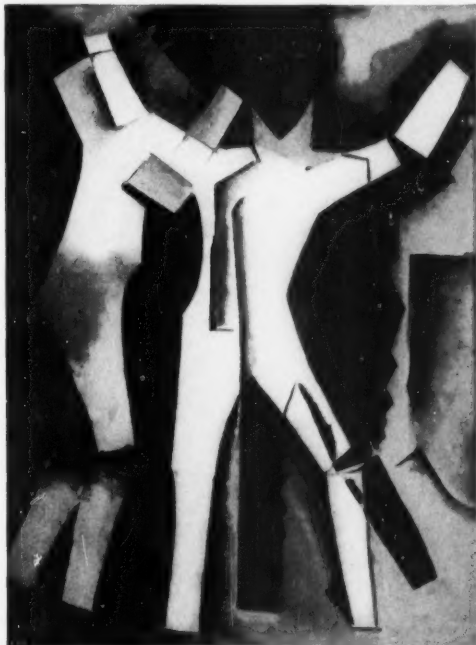
Like medicine men or primitive witch doctors, they exorcized the evil by the evil itself. They conjured and sublimated the mechanical by giving to it poetic names and content. They made fun of it by inventing machines designed not to function but to inspire—emotional machines like Duchamp's *Bride*. Picabia made drawings of engines that looked like blueprints and called them *Amorous Procession* (1917) or *Reveil matin* or any other name. Mankind with its habits, its mechanical way of thinking and acting, was after all not so different from the machine. If you cut this man of the "brave new world" out of any

material (as Braque had done with words or letters to make them talk) and put him together again, he no doubt would convey the idea of functioning.

Thus in the years between 1915 and 1917 Man Ray painted a number of compositions with figures cut out like tailors' patterns, increasingly flat compositions with spectrum colors. Besides the underlying idea, which corresponded to the dada experiments, there was a definite new approach to form and color in two dimensions. One must remember that in these same years Braque, Picasso and Juan Gris turned from the almost monochrome plastic objects, broken up and composed in simultaneous views in space, to the projection on the plane—to textures, *collages*, strong color harmonies bound together by interwoven design and tones. This search for two-dimensional form capable of retaining the evocative power of three-dimensional illusion has been one of the greatest ventures in modern painting. Man Ray gradually flattened his paintings as completely as a deflated tire. But as even the flattest tire still leaves its mark in the sand, a new depth emerges from the imprint.

Study in Two Dimensions and *Interpretation* (City, River, Tree, Dance), were the recurring themes at the first one-man show of Man Ray's work that the Daniel Gallery arranged in the fall of 1915. Only recently has the pioneer-

Dance-Interpretation, 1915, oil, 36 x 28",
collection of the artist



Black Widow, 1916, oil, 72 x 36",
collection of the artist

ing activity of the Daniel Gallery of those days been recalled by Elizabeth McCausland in a vivid article (*MAGAZINE OF ART*, November, 1951, pp. 280-85). The *Dance-Interpretation* in this exhibition manifested most clearly the transition in Man Ray's painting from the early plastic concept towards a new trend, accomplished within the year 1916 in pictures like *Woman*, *Legend*, *The Black Widow* and above all in *Promenade*.

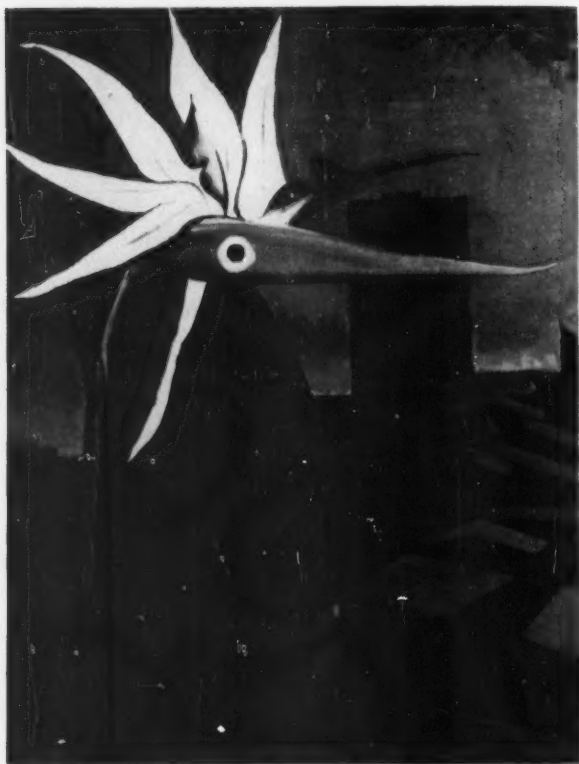
While *Dance-Interpretation* still bears the carapace of a three-dimensional world, of bodies scattered between light and shadows, *Promenade* is built of pure lines, interrelated planes and divided, intersected patterns reminiscent of human figures in movement. All the rhythm now emanates from the interplay of overlapping planes and colors. Boomerang-like shapes are cut into human forms, descendants of archaic-geometrical as well as African ancestral figures, held in suspense by clear contrasts of brighter and darker, warm and cold tints: pale ochre and olive-green and gray against emerald green, white, pink and tones of brown. In the color plates of *Revolving Doors*, created in the same year but not published until 1926, Man Ray manifested this phase of his work with authority.

The naturalist who goes hunting for shells, insects or butterflies sees only the species. Neither he nor the naturalistic painter opened our eyes to the wonders of creation, to those marvels of texture, geometrical design and color arrangement that we now find everywhere. It was modern art that gave us the feeling for the elemental, instead of the superficial, beauty of nature. Paradoxically the rubbish-collages of K. Schwitters contributed more to this than all the brilliance of Matisse. But to combine the elementary and the superficial was the achievement of surrealism. Man Ray later introduced flowers and bananas and butterflies into his abstract compositions, as he used eyes and lips and keyholes—for things detached and in a new context reveal a different kind of beauty and emotion.

In *The Ship "Narcissus"* of 1917, inspired by Rimbaud's *Bateau ivre*, Man Ray was already drifting away from the synthetic puritanism of *Promenade*, although still employing more or less geometric forms. Within an oval composition accentuated by strong, dark intersections which from a distance recall a Congo mask, a cabin door opens into a night sky, thus opposing abstract and illusionistic elements (see cover). The words Georges Hugnet used in "The Dada Spirit in Painting" (1932; reprinted in *Dada*, edited by Robert Motherwell, New York, Wittenborn, 1951)



Above: *Snowball*, 1926, painted photo object, formerly *Edition Surréaliste*



Left: *The Uncomprehended*, 1939, oil, collection of the artist, courtesy Museum of Modern Art

to explain Jean Arp's cover for the first *Anthology Dada*, describe perfectly the essentials of Man Ray's picture: "Despite the desire for order that characterizes it, [it] might be said to be to cubism what Tzara's words [of his automatic poems] jumbled in a hat were to the poetry of the early nineteenth century (which has also, absurdly enough, been called cubist)." Here it becomes evident where the intermarriage of the "ready-made," the tailor's pattern with the flat pattern of the synthetic cubism of *Promenade*, was finally leading to, and where it already differed basically from contemporary works by Picasso or Juan Gris.

The double aspect of life emphasized by de Chirico and the futurist painters as early as 1910-11, the two kinds of reality, were blended into one by the mental exercises and experiments of dada-surrealism. Let us take the things closest to us:

A mouth, for instance, speaks, sings and produces sounds like a phonograph; but it is also instrumental in eating, kissing and making love and has a shape expressive in itself. By evoking one faculty or another through association with other objects, we may obtain an infinite number of sensations. Or, through the eye we perceive the outside world; thus the images of the world are caught in the eye. From the center of our ego we look through the eye as through a keyhole, and eye and keyhole perform in some respect the same function. At the same time the eye appears to be a rather intriguing object, and its representation in an unusual context may excite our fantasy just as the Eye of God in its triangle excites the fantasy of Catholic worshippers.

In an object called *Snowball*, a painting entitled *Keyhole*, another painting called *The Uncomprehended*, and a drawing of a metronome to which an eye is attached, Man Ray played with virtuosity on such associations, after he joined forces with the surrealist movement in Paris.

In 1917, the year of *The Ship "Narcissus,"* and of the foundation of the *Société Anonyme* and the first Independent show, Duchamp issued in New York the *blind man*, a dada magazine following Stieglitz' "291." Previous contacts made with the group in Zurich became ties when, in 1917, Picabia moved to Barcelona and later to Zurich. A few years later, for the only issue of *New York Dada*, edited and designed by Duchamp and Man Ray, Tzara wrote a testimonial and Man Ray made a collage of his favorite subject, the tailored woman—her body the photograph of a nude taken from life, cut in half and mounted by a cardboard puppet. *New York Dada* was its originators' farewell to the United States. In the year of its appearance, 1921, Man Ray sailed to Paris for a long stay.

The bars in Paris were still filled with American sailors, obviously forgotten there at the end of the war, and Man Ray, now carrying a

camera besides his easel, was received as a magician from the New World. Duchamp had preceded him by a few months and introduced him to the inner circles. To the catalogue of his first exhibition, held at the Librairie Six the end of this year, Arp, Breton, Eluard, Aragon, Tzara and Ribemont-Dessaigne contributed short introductory notes: "Monsieur Ray is born one does not know where. Having been successively a coal dealer, a millionaire several times over and chairman of the chewing-gum trust, he finally decided to follow the invitation of the dadaists." Among the works shown were paintings done since 1916, and some collages and objects like *Isadora Duncan in the Nude*, *My First-Born*, *The Horse between the Two Extremities*, *Alcohol to Burn* and the often reproduced *Admiration of the Orchestrelle for the Cinematograph*.

As the painting of members of the dada group had previously constituted only a part of their wider activities, the birth of surrealism from the rib of dada—or out of the head of Breton-Zeus—did not alter this situation. The announcement of Max Ernst's first show in Paris bore, significantly enough, the subtitle "Beyond Painting." Too many new sensations had to be discovered in those hectic years following 1921, and each discovery led to another one; it was only after the experiences had crystallized that pictures based on them could materialize.

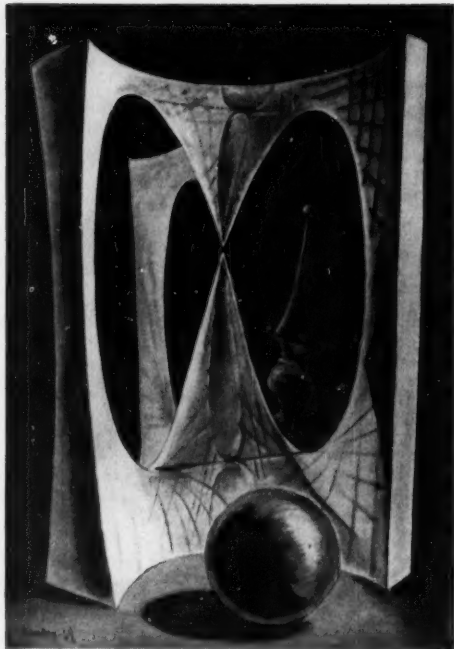
Whether or not Man Ray turned to photography as a dada-gesture of repudiation against "ART," as has been suggested, seems to me irrelevant under the circumstances. It was furthermore inevitable that these other preoccupations should infiltrate his painting. In his "rayographs" he united the object and photography, and in some of his objects, such as *Snowball*, he added painting, an eye painted on a glass ball covering candles. He still maintains that Dürer and Leonardo used the principles of a camera to save themselves many a tedious hour.

The object, real or painted—that is, the real or photographic aspect of the painted object—alternates from now on with more abstract forms, and often we find both integrated in a single picture. Thus in *The Uncomprehended*, an abstract ground is strewn with geometrical patterns like flagstones and the leaf and flower of a "bird-of-paradise" plant with the eye of a real bird. In contrast to Ernst, Dali or Magritte, Man Ray seldom lingers over realism in details. The spontaneity of stroke and expression remains constantly essential to the freedom of his imagery. Only if it serves a specific purpose may he use a *trompe l'oeil* technique, as in *Observatory Time—The Lovers or Easel Picture*.

In *Observatory Time—The Lovers*, which he painted for the bedroom wall of his studio, changing it several times between 1930 and 1932, a huge pair of lips drifts like a leaf over the sky—a clouded late-afternoon sky above the silhou-

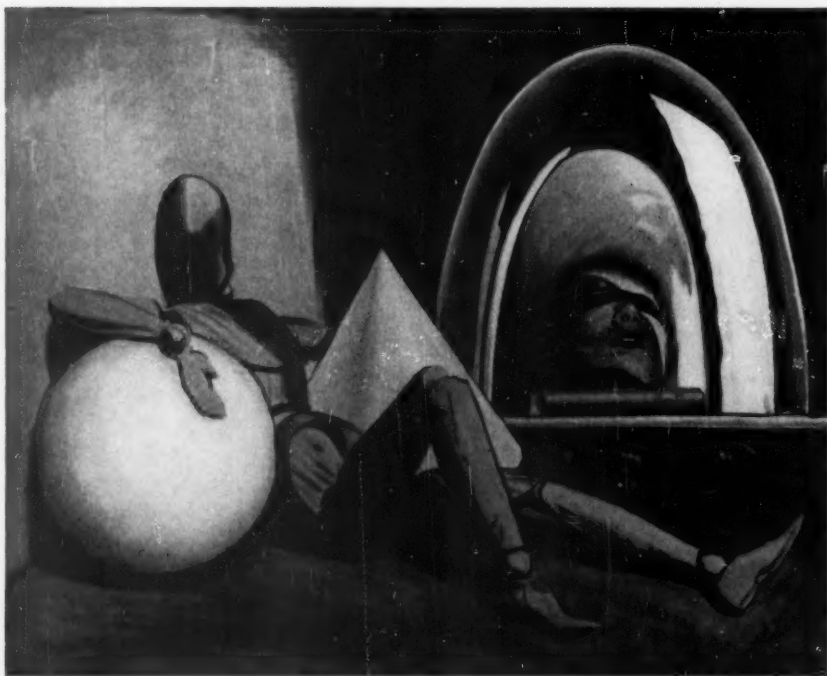


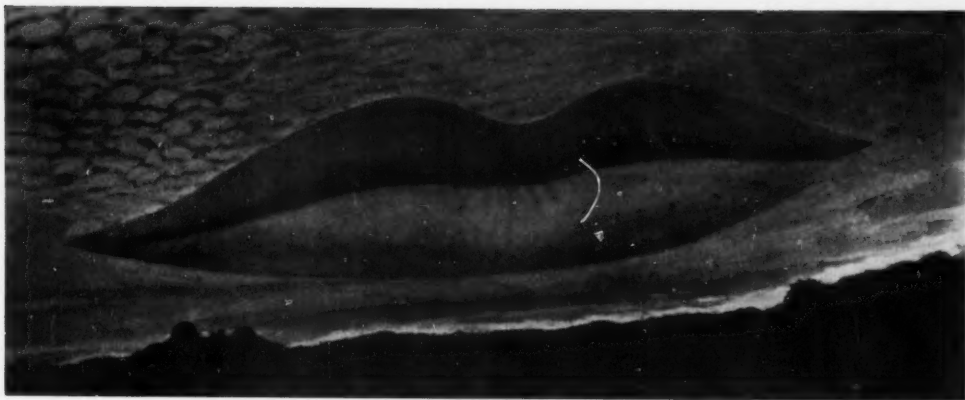
Easel Picture, 1938, oil, 65 x 52", collection of the artist



Diderot's Harpsichord or The Merchant of Venice, 1948, oil, 36 x 30", collection Mrs. Mary Stohart, Santa Monica, Calif.

Aline and Valcour, 1950, oil, 30 x 38", collection of the artist





Observatory Time—The Lovers, 1930-32, oil, 40 x 100", collection William N. Copley, Paris

ette of the Luxembourg Gardens, trees and the nearby Observatory building; the accumulated eroticism of Paris eternal, with all its musty smell and perfumed odor. In *Easel Picture* we find the illusionistic effects of the "picture within the picture," the two different spheres of reality which de Chirico first brought to our consciousness. While the easel has been painted with the photographic minuteness of a *trompe l'oeil*, it cheats us about the life-study drawn on the canvas, the soft contours of which are strangely reversed in its linear abstraction. The plastic quality one expects in the "life" study unexpectedly turns up in the easel instead.

Around 1936, or as Man Ray recalls, "about sixteen years ago, Max Ernst first called my attention to the mathematical objects languishing in the dusty cases of the Poincaré Institute in Paris. I took new courage in my resolve to seek inspiration from man-made objects." The objects at the Institute comprise complicated mathematical formulas transformed into sculpture-like shapes. To interpret the most logical discipline, mathematics, in an illogical human manner offered a challenge equal to overcoming the frustration that modern science has imprinted on our minds.

Man Ray named most of his interpretations on this subject his *Shakespearean Equations*, as he gave to each painting the title of one of Shakespeare's plays. A white triangular stone-like object with veins and a tip suggesting a woman's breast is called *Hamlet*, a masklike dark sheet-iron form with a snout *Othello*, and so forth. The paintings thus produced are in some respects a continuation of the former rayographs and photographic abstractions, which for their part had a certain impact on the sculptural constructivism of artists like Gabo and Pevsner. This explains an apparent similarity, while at the same time the almost theatrical playfulness of Man Ray's inventions diverges from the austere forms of constructivism.

Most of these "Shakespearean" paintings were executed only after the second World War, while Man Ray was living in Hollywood. As many of the leading surrealists, including Breton, Ernst, Masson and Tanguy, fled to this country at the beginning of the war, surrealism found here a revival which, in spite of the stimulating shows held in Paris and London, it had not achieved in Europe. For Man Ray these years in Hollywood meant a return to painting, as he had no dealings with the movie industry (*Dreams That Money Can Buy* in which he collaborated was independently produced) and made no effort to exploit his fame as a photographer. With his philosophy of taking things as they come, he contented himself with the small world of Vine Street, finishing his Shakespearean and other paintings.

Defying the movies, he painted his first narrative picture after a novel by the Marquis de Sade, *Aline et Valcour*, utilizing in it old photographs from Paris. The decapitated head of a blindfolded girl on a book under a glass bell—the old representation of Justice—with a wooden mannequin lying exhausted between a globe and a cone beside the decapitated beauty: this is Man Ray's expression of what has become of the heroic knight and the blindfolded Justice in our age. Knights, armored figures composed of sheet-iron cylinders fighting invisible obstacles, brick walls which eventually may erect themselves to form an imaginary portrait of the Marquis de Sade in the Bastille, obsess his fantasy like the symbols of dreams: *The Pyramid*; *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*; *Schoolday Souvenirs*; *Danaë in the Metro*. . . .

Today Man Ray is back in Paris, and he still maintains what Guillaume Apollinaire once wrote of his friend Marcel Duchamp: "Our task as artists is to keep our work free from all perceptions which might become notions." This, after all, was the essence of Bergson's philosophy of transition and change, half a century ago.

Contributors

JEAN CHARLOT of the art department of the University of Hawaii at Honolulu recently completed a large fresco for the Bishop Bank at Waikiki on the subject "First Contact of Hawaii with the Outside World." Among Mr. Charlot's many books are *Art Making from Mexico to China*, published by Sheed and Ward in 1950, and his forthcoming *Mexican Mural Renaissance*, to be issued by the Stanford University Press.

FREDERICK R. PLEASANTS is curator of primitive art at the Brooklyn Museum. Miss Agnes C. Sims of Santa Fe, New Mexico, who made the drawings of the rock paintings, kindly provided the descriptions accompanying the illustrations for Mr. Pleasants' article.

The article by NORRIS K. SMITH was originally presented as a paper at the annual meeting of the College Art Association of America held in New York last year. Mr. Smith, who formerly taught at Columbia University, is now a member of the art department of Hunter College.

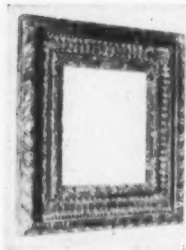
PAUL WESCHER is curator at the Los Angeles County Museum and recently completed the catalogue of old master paintings in that collection. His article on "The 'Idea' in Giuseppe Arcimboldo's Art" appeared in *MAGAZINE OF ART* for January, 1950.

Forthcoming

The February issue will include: "Things and the Creative Self" by JACQUES MARITAIN; "An Artist in the Streets" by CHRISTOPHER TUNNARD; WILLIAM SEITZ, "Abstract Expressionism"; CARL B. COMPTON, "The Cult of the Female Among the Tarascan"; and extracts from DARIUS MILHAUD's forthcoming autobiography, *Notes Without Music*.

Correction

The editors regret the error in the caption identifying the cut used on last month's cover. *White Flood* in the Löffler collection, Zurich, discussed on page 361 of Mr. Lindsay's article, is of course by Wassily Kandinsky, not Paul Klee.



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Film Review

Daphni: Virgin of the Golden Laurels, produced by Dr. Angelos Prokopiou, directed by George Hoyningen-Huene, photographed by Joseph Hepp, commentary by Aldous Huxley, narrated by Ethel Barrymore and Maurice Evans. Music by Howard Brubeck. 35 mm; black-and-white; sound; 15 min. Distributed by Helen Ainsworth Corp., 197 N. Canon Drive, Beverly Hills, Calif. Apply for rates.

The eleventh-century church of Daphni in Greece, whose mosaics rank among the most celebrated glories of Byzantine art, has been made the subject of a film that is likely to win acceptance even among those conservative art historians who thus far have viewed most films on art with sentiments ranging from uneasy suspicion to deepest outrage. This achievement is without doubt due in great part to the director, George Hoyningen-Huene. Well known as a still photographer, Mr. Hoyningen-Huene has previously turned his camera on other monuments of art in Egypt, Greece and elsewhere. Thanks to his sensitive response to nuances of light and surface, the luminosity of the mosaics at Daphni is clearly apparent even in black and white, as is also the delicate variation of texture caused by the slightly irregular setting of the tiny cubes that make up the decoration.

The camera moves with stately pace from scene to scene, lingering over especially dramatic or touching details in the great cycles—the feasts of Christ and of the Virgin, the narratives of the Passion and the Legend of Mary.

What this film communicates, as could no sequence of slides of equally high photographic quality, is a sense of scale and interior space. We pass from the outside of the little monastic church, perched amid trees in a picturesque mountainous site, to the interior. There the mosaics that sheathe the walls lend majesty to the relatively small proportions of the building. We are aware of the light that bathes the entire structure and glances from the shining surface of the brilliant mosaics. We advance towards the apse, and the *Pantocrator* in the cupola looms gradually above us, reaching its climax of awesome impact as we pass directly below.

The commentary is based in large part on the Biblical or apocryphal narrative that provides the subject matter of the scenes. Though it attempts no profound stylistic analysis of the mosaics, the information it imparts is accurate and discreet. One may perhaps regret that Maurice Evans is not the narrator throughout the film instead of in the first half only. Beautiful as they may be in themselves, the inimitable throaty tones of Ethel Barrymore are so unmistakably associated with her that they cannot sustain the illusion that what we hear is the voice of the Virgin.

HELEN M. FRANC

MAGAZINE OF ART

Recent Art Film Releases

Contemporary Silversmithing—The Stretching Method, produced by Science Pictures for Handy & Harman. 16 mm; color; sound; 20 min. The making of a triangular sauce boat from a thick sheet of sterling silver by the stretching technique. Available from Handy & Harman Craft Service Department, 82 Fulton St., New York 38. Rental \$2; sale: apply for price.

Goya—The Disasters of War, by Pierre Kast, produced by Argos Films; story and original music by Jean Gremillon; narration by Frank Getlein. 16 mm; black and white; sound; 20 min. Goya's lithographs as a commentary not only on the Napoleonic War of 1807, but on all wars. Available from A. F. Films, Inc., 1600 Broadway, New York 19. Rental \$10; sale \$80.

Lisner, produced by Thomas Daly for the National Film Board of Canada in cooperation with the National Gallery of Canada and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Directed by Allan Wargon; photographed by Robert Humble; music by Maurice Blackburn. 16 mm; color; sound; 20 min. The work of Arthur Lisner as art educator and landscape painter. Available from International Film Bureau, Inc., 57 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago 4, Ill. Rental \$6; sale \$150.

Mambo, produced by Jordan Belson. 16 mm; color; sound; 4½ min. Non-representational scroll paintings shot in sequence to give the illusion of rhythmic motion, accompanied by syncopated music. Available from Kinesis, 566 Commercial Street, San Francisco, Calif. Apply for rates.

Outdoor Mural on the Arts, produced by The Harmon Foundation. 16 mm; color; silent; 33 min. Abraham Joel Tobias demonstrates the use of ethyl silicate as a painting medium, in a series of outdoor murals for Adelphi College. Available from The Harmon Foundation, 140 Nassau St., New York 38. Rental \$7.50; sale \$270.

Quetzalcoatl, produced by the University of Southern California Department of Cinema. Directed by Ray Wisniewski; script by Ray Wisniewski and Bud Hollzer; photographed by C. R. Lawrence and Akira Akura; music by John Paddock. 16 mm; color; sound; 18 min. Pre-Columbian masks and other artifacts tell the legend of Quetzalcoatl, "Fairest God" of the Aztecs. Available from Audio-Visual Services, Dept. of Cinema, University of Southern California, Los Angeles 7. Rental \$5; sale \$155.

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SERINUNTE: THE FALLEN TEMPLES. Sperimental film. Palermo, 1952. A film ode to antiquity.

DIMITRI WORKS IN BLACK WAX. Ancona Films. Rome, 1952. Details of circ-perdu technique in a charming portrait of a sculptor at work.

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Book Reviews

Edgar Waterman Anthony, *Romanesque Frescoes*, Princeton, Princeton University, 1951. x + 208 pp., 500 illus. \$25.

Wall painting of the romanesque period, singularly enough, has attracted less attention than its counterparts in architecture or sculpture. This is the first book that endeavors to collect all the frescoes of this era in Western Europe under one cover. The project was an enormous one, for the amount of material is amazing. Some of the frescoes have been newly discovered from under coats of whitewash, but most of them have been known for years and published, especially in the last thirty years, in studies of regional or national groups. To collect all these was an encyclopedic task that might easily have occupied a corps of scholars for years. That Anthony died before the book was through the press is much to be regretted. It remains a worthy memorial to his scholarship and tireless energy.

The book starts with a discussion of the principal sources that contribute to the formation of the romanesque style from the late antique styles of the Early Christian period through Carolingian times. Then comes a short discussion of iconography and ornament, and following it a summary of the characteristics of each country, stressing the most important monuments and their relation to the other contemporary arts of manuscript illumination, mosaic and sculpture. The next chapter, on technique, is brief but valuable and ends with a description of the method of transferring frescoes from their original walls. The rest of the book is a listing of romanesque frescoes, country by country and district by district. The description of even the most important monuments is necessarily brief, and the illustrations, although there are five hundred of them, seldom give a complete or adequate picture of any series. Many of the minor paintings described are not illustrated at all. The door for further study is opened, however, by the extensive footnotes which give the bibliography for each monument and form one of the most valuable features of the book.

The author has usually depended upon others for dating, as indeed he had to, but there are many cases of disputes where this reviewer would have welcomed a more definite stand. In many other cases, no date whatsoever is given. In a book of this sort, the discussion of iconography must perhaps be slight; one is thankful for an occasional comparison or suggestion. The analysis of stylistic trends, however, is quite inadequate for the serious student. Color is sometimes described but usually not mentioned, and needless to say no black-and-white photographs do justice to an art where color plays such an important role as it does in romanesque frescoes.

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Certain trends emerge from the book as a whole: the influence of the Benedictines, of Monte Cassino and Cluny; the neo-Hellenism of South Italy; the popularity of the *Majestas Domini* as apse decoration and of the enthroned Virgin; the lively story-telling and genre of many of the scenes, and the presence of more secular and contemporary subjects than one might imagine; the unfortunate restorations and repaintings of most of the frescoes of Germany and Scandinavia, and some in England; and finally the late lingering on of romanesque style, even into the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in certain regions.

Anthony's book emphasizes the need for a photographic corpus of romanesque frescoes. Until that is forthcoming, this book will be indispensable for any study of the subject.

MARION LAWRENCE
Barnard College

P. T. A. Swillens, Johannes Vermeer: Painter of Delft: 1632-1673, New York, Studio, 1951. 221 pp., 80 plates. \$7.50.

This new book on Vermeer is clearly the result of many years of devoted labor. The author deserves our respect for the patience and diligence that he expended on his subject. As one would expect as a result of such application, the book contains a number of novel observations. The story of Vermeer's family and of that of his wife is told in greater detail than elsewhere. The meager documents on the artist's own life have been interpreted with a good deal of common sense. Circumstantial evidence points to the fact that Vermeer was a Catholic; I am less willing to accept the author's contention that Vermeer stopped working in the catastrophic year 1672. Swillens describes life in Delft in the seventeenth century at great length and gives an interesting sketch of the artists' guild and its practices, even though he finds no reflection of these social factors in Vermeer's works.

Vermeer's paintings are scrutinized somewhat as if they were archeological relics. Chairs, pitchers, maps, costumes and other objects that appear in them are identified, indexed and catalogued. Moreover, a large section of the book and of the plates is given over to diagrams, both in ground plan and in elevation, of the setting of Vermeer's pictures. The chief result of this study seems to be that all the interiors of Vermeer can be reduced to five rooms. Swillens has also determined the exact spot from which Vermeer painted his two landscapes. He was guided in these studies by the belief that Vermeer began painting 'only after he had set up the whole picture like a still-life. He describes the artist as if he were a fussy stage-manager before the curtain rises, scrutinizing the room, adjusting a drapery here, a window there, moving furniture and models until the effect is "just right." He does not say how Vermeer controlled the *light*, which after all is such a fundamental factor in his paintings.

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Towards the end of the book the author makes a considerable effort to balance his pragmatic approach by esthetic interpretation. While some of the formulations in this section have real meaning with regard to Vermeer's art, the author often seems to wrestle not too successfully with his terms and concepts—as for instance when he calls Vermeer's art "naturalistic-impressionistic-realism" or "poetical or coloristic realism." Obviously dissatisfied with such terminology, Swillens ends with an appeal to a kind of mystic empathy: "Again and again repeated penetration into the spirit of his works, a deep contemplation in which finally all thought, consideration, and seeking come to a standstill, is urgently necessary to understand Vermeer."

Between unthinking contemplation and archeological classification, however, there are many legitimate problems, the solution of which might help towards an understanding of Vermeer's art. What, for instance, is the nature of the balance that makes Vermeer's compositions appear "just right"? How are solids and voids distributed? What is the contribution of perspective and its function? Despite a discussion of Vermeer's study of light and shade, the subtlety of the interaction of these elements and their distribution for compositional effect seem insufficiently treated. Because of the author's interest in "total vision," the artist's development is only briefly outlined, and consideration of his relationship to contemporary artists and trends is limited to a discussion of the possible influences of Bramer and Fabritius.

Nor is the author a reliable guide in questions of attribution. He takes—at least in my opinion—a hypercritical attitude. The Dresden *Procuress* (euphemistically called the "Matchmaker") and the Arenberg *Portrait of a Girl* are considered "doubtful" works. The Widener *Girl with a Flute* as well as the Mellon *Girl with a Red Hat*, both now in the National Gallery at Washington and as beautiful and genuine as any Vermeer, are summarily dismissed as wrongly attributed without being discussed, and they are, in fact, not even reproduced.

The many, though uneven, plates contain a good deal of material of interest for Vermeer's historical background. All in all, however, one must regretfully conclude that while Swillens' book, which will be used for reference by students of Vermeer, may be the "latest" word on the master, it is far from being the last.

JULIUS S. HELD
Barnard College

Edwin DeT. Bechtel, *Freedom of the Press and L'Association Mensuelle: Philippon versus Louis-Philippe*, New York, Grolier Club, 1952. 104 pp. + 24 plates. \$12.50.

In the winter of 1949-50, the Grolier Club in New York held an exhibition of political caricatures that was a distinct surprise to most of the visitors. It was probably the first time that the twenty-four lithographs and etchings which make up a complete set of *L'Association Mensuelle* were shown in public. There was hardly a visitor who did not recognize some of Daumier's most effective political cartoons. But the prints by Grandville and other lesser-known artists, and also the very pressing reasons for the launching of this particular series, were virtually unknown.

The present publication of the Grolier Club is the first attempt to reproduce these caricatures as a complete series, to decipher their full meaning and to set forth the circumstances of their publication.

The results of this attempt are rewarding in more ways than one and likely to interest a varied group of readers. Designed as a monograph on a series of prints, this study reaches far beyond the specialized interests of the print collector. It will attract anyone concerned with the role of art in modern society and with the rise of political caricature; it will interest those concerned with the character of graphic processes; it contains significant chapters on the struggle for the freedom of the press and the fight against censorship.

For these reasons this is a timely publication. The social and political function of art and artist is a topic of steadily increasing importance, a field hitherto monopolized largely by critics of orthodox Marxist training. Unbiased, factual studies of how the artist responds to the issues of his time are greatly needed today. It is one of the vital responsibilities in the defense of democracy. Mr. Bechtel's study of the struggle of the publisher Philippon and his artists against the monarch Louis-Philippe has the qualities of penetration, of familiarity with the milieu and, above all, the detached objectivity that is so essential today in this kind of study.

Philippon, courageous champion of the freedom of the press, publisher of the weekly *La Caricature* (since 1830) and of the daily *Charivari* (since 1832), devoted his life to this mission. The freedom of the press was one of the major political issues of the day—the most powerful weapon at hand against the repressive tendencies

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of Louis-Philippe's restoration monarchy. Aided by the forceful and popular union of caricature and lithography, the press had gained unprecedented powers. But continuous fines and imprisonment were draining Philipon's resources. There had been various attempts to raise money for subsidy. In the year 1832 he created *L'Association Mensuelle Lithographique* as a subscription venture "to help to provide a reserve fund, a war chest, to pay his fines."

The twenty-four caricatures of the series tell us—autobiographically as it were—the story of the birth and infancy of the new medium of journalistic political caricature. But we witness this story not only in the content of the prints; their style also is a vivid testimony of growth. We see with great clarity the rise from the early weaker attempts—overcrowded, overdetailed, à la Hogarth, full of topical allusions, captions and in need of much explanatory comment by Philipon—to the magnificent self-explanatory strength of the twenty-six-year-old Daumier.

The quality of the reproductions in this new publication is excellent. Its editorial deficiencies are minor ones. In the sketch of Philipon's career one misses a reference to the important role that he played in the life of Gustave Doré. The brief list of Grandville's most important works lacks mention of his delightful *Animated Flowers*. Also, it would seem that a certain amount of repetition and overlapping might have been avoided if the first chapter, on the *Association Mensuelle*, had followed rather than preceded the chapters containing the careful reconstruction of the political background out of which it grew. These, however, are by no means serious defects in the stimulating and rewarding study of a little-known chapter in the interrelation of art and politics.

HELLMUT LEHMANN-HAUPT
New York City

Lloyd Goodrich, *John Sloan, New York, Whitney Museum of American Art (distributed by Macmillan), 1952. 80 pp., 46 black-and-white and 3 color plates. \$3.*

Selden Rodman, *Portrait of the Artist as an American. Ben Shahn: A Biography with Pictures, New York, Harper, 1951. 180 pp., 148 illus. + 2 color plates. \$6.50.*

Elizabeth McCausland, *Marsden Hartley, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota, 1952. 80 pp., 43 illus. \$2.50.*

The appearance, within a few months, of three excellent studies of artists of our time who achieved stature as individuals and as painters, strikes a welcome note in American art publications. While there have been many good picture-stories of contemporary American painters in the weekly magazines—excellent ones among them—their brevity and the apparent necessity of using a popular or sensational angle has sometimes kept

them from giving a true or broad picture of the individual artists. And, as H. Harvard Arnason states in his foreword to the Hartley book, "there are still very few sound studies of our major artists . . . very few serious historians and critics who have published extensively on American painting and sculpture."

Lloyd Goodrich is a seasoned writer who has done several excellent studies of American artists, past and present. On all counts his book on *John Sloan* is the best of the three works reviewed here. It is direct, simple, yet meaty. Each paragraph carries a telling characterization of the artist, or an anecdote that graphically portrays how and why the artist was as he was and not otherwise. The book shapes up with the same kind of direct, graphic, visual approach, full of human touches, that we find in the best of Sloan's paintings and etchings. The illustrations are well selected, good in placing, scale and sequence; happily, all Sloan's work reproduces well in black and white; and the excellently chosen color plates illustrate distinct phases of Sloan's development as a colorist over a period of thirty years.

Rodman's book on Shahn starts with a lengthy table of contents, list of illustrations and an involved introduction. This interferes with the tempo of the book as a whole and with the direct expression of Shahn's "acutely American search for roots, for a 'usable past.'" Rodman's presentation, starting with the present and ending with the artist's birth, is fascinating enough and invites re-reading of various sections. The effect reminds one of examining a roll of film after development, by starting with the last exposure on the roll—an appropriate treatment for a series of intimate "candid shots" that appear as striking counterparts of Shahn's drawings and paintings. The illustrations are perhaps too many, and some of them too small. The scale of the reproductions and the page layouts do not always reach the high standard set by one of our best graphic designers, Ben Shahn. The fact that Shahn is "a man of paradoxes" is well brought out, but an obsession with this idea does not contribute to the unity of the book, nor does it give the strong impression of a warm, fatherly, approachable man that Shahn conveys when one meets him in person today.

The Hartley book condenses in fewer pages than either of the others a full account of the chronology and main influences of the artist's life and his development as a painter. This is a difficult task, considering the complex plot of Hartley's travels and styles. One could wish for at least a few illustrations of work of European masters he admired or emulated, for comparison. As it stands, Miss McCausland's book illustrates very well the range of the Hartleys in the Mr. and Mrs. Hudson D. Walker Collection at the University of Minnesota Gallery, a good selection from which will tour the country in the next two years. For a complete study of the best of the artist's work, a half dozen

illustrations of key paintings in other collections would have added a great deal.

Miss McCausland's text is clear and revealing. It evaluates well the brilliant flowering of Hartley's painting at the end of his career and the kind of reality he achieved without sacrificing the poetry and deep meaning he found in the "tragedy of life" and in the "uncorrupted nature" he studied and learned to understand. If the picture of Hartley as a man is less clear than the revelation of the artist's accomplishment in his paintings, it is because Miss McCausland's purpose in writing was different from that of Goodrich or Rodman.

Reading these three books in sequence brings up interesting thoughts on American art in our century. It becomes clear that the strongly individual character of these three artists can be compared more readily than one would expect. Each is a realist, though the realities in each case are as different as the artists' background and heritage. The importance of environment—of the land, the cities and the way of life—emerges, as one discovers through these books what it means to be an American and a sincere painter.

DWIGHT KIRSCH
Des Moines Art Center

Modern Artists in America, First Series, ed. by Robert Motherwell, Ad Reinhardt and Bernard Karpel, New York, Wittenborn Schultz, 1952. 198 pp., 166 illus. \$5.50.

The editors describe this "first biennial to document modern art in the United States" as one "designed to convey the sense of modern art as it happened." And indeed it does suggest something of the change and conflict proper to a movement as important and assertive as "modern art"—in this case taken to mean the more progressive, abstract movements which still lack an adequate descriptive label. This sense is best conveyed by the tantalizingly abbreviated transcripts of the 1950 *avant-garde* round table discussion at Studio 35 in New York, and of the Western Round Table of Modern Art held in San Francisco the year before. These stenographic reports preserve much of the give-and-take of discussion among artists and critics, and if no conclusions were reached, much that is valuable and worth knowing was said in the course of the talks.

The project actually amounts to more than just the promised review of the 1949 and 1950 seasons on Fifty-Seventh Street. This volume includes an admirable bibliography of modern art prepared by Bernard Karpel; lists of New York

exhibitions by artists; a list of acquisitions of modern works of art by American museums; and a series of excerpts, with full bibliographical references, to significant statements pro and con modern art by its friends and enemies. The illustrations comprise a selection of representative examples of modern art exhibited during the two seasons under review. The familiar and the unfamiliar occur without distinction, and it seems odd that no titles are indicated (nor dates), since the relevancy of titles is one of the more interesting points discussed in Studio 35. Perhaps in subsequent editions the visual documentation could be more usefully restricted to artists little known or exhibiting for the first time. And this reader, for history's sake, would like to see the exhibition list expanded to include shows in other major cities whence often cometh, much later, much talent. Meanwhile, a most promising venture has been well begun.

GEORGE HEARD HAMILTON
Yale University

H. Ruhemann and E. M. Kemp, *The Artist at Work*, Baltimore, Penguin, 1951. 72 pp., 175 illus. incl. 32 in color. \$2.

At first glance the original form of presentation and the eye appeal of this booklet give promise of successfully explaining the artist's approach. But the final result is disappointing. Unfortunately, the authors confuse technical facts with esthetic judgments. Whereas the brief text devoted to methods of painting, past and present, is expert and helpful, statements relating to what makes a work of art great seem both pretentious and inadequate.

This small book tries to do too much. Instead of limiting its purpose to explanatory exposition juxtaposed with corresponding illustrations, it also insists on an over-simplified code of qualitative values, particularly unfortunate in the section devoted to twentieth-century art, where the authors seem less at home and where lack of chronological perspective makes dogmatic opinions especially dangerous.

Despite these failings, *The Artist at Work* should not be dismissed too readily. Parts of the text, supported by excellent illustrations demonstrating optical principles and technical methods used by noted painters of all periods, are vastly illuminating.

KATHARINE KUH
The Art Institute of Chicago

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James Marston Fitch, *American Building: The Forces that Shape It*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1948. 372 pp., 6 plates. \$5.

In its attempt to cover the immense field inclusive of everything having to do with building, Fitch's *American Building* falls into line with such classics as Vitruvius' *De Architectura* of the period of Imperial Rome and of the *Mānasāra Silpaśāstra* of Gupta India; and like these ancient works it follows first one pattern of approach and then another, repeats itself and oversteps the boundaries of the subject. Time alone will determine whether, like them, it will be preserved as a more-or-less lonely survivor imparting to future generations some notion of the state of architecture at this mid-point of the twentieth century A. D. If such should be its good fortune, what will those post-atomic-hydrogen-bomb-age peoples think of our concepts of building?

The first idea they will be presented upon opening the book is that a man named Rockefeller spent ten million dollars in order to propagate throughout America an archaic type of architecture known as Williamsburg. They will come to understand that the people who built on this continent were thinking constantly in terms of technological advance, that even the earliest builders had but one thought uppermost in mind—that of preparing for and dreaming of the day when they would be able to produce that auspicious type of building most expressive of American hopes and ideals: the factory. Thomas Jefferson took refuge in classic architecture out of "the patriot's desire to see his country beautiful, wealthy, strong and respected." He lived to see his agrarian republic "submerged by an industrial democracy," which was, incidentally, against his earlier, shortsighted prediction. Jefferson was old-school; he had had the misfortune to have been born a Southerner. "It was the expanding industrial culture of the North which gave the nation the inventors and pragmatic scientists of the period," points out the author. "It is thus not accidental that the leading architects and engineers were likewise to be found in the North—Latrobe, Mills, Haviland, Isaiah Rogers, Bogardus, and Roebling." The author evidently overlooks the fact that Latrobe first landed in this country in the South, that he died in the South, and that some of his finest work was executed at Washington, Baltimore, Virginia, Kentucky and New Orleans; that Mills got his start under Jefferson and produced his most noteworthy build-

ings in Washington, Baltimore, Richmond and Charleston, South Carolina. It might also be recalled that Isaiah Rogers launched his professional career by winning the competition for the Mobile Theatre (in Alabama, no less), which he constructed, and that—quoting Prof. Talbot Hamlin's *Greek Revival Architecture in America*—"the list of his [Roger's] work includes hotels built in the South and West between 1840 and 1865." Bogardus (whose name is less well known than that of Roebling, the builder of the Victorian-gothic Brooklyn Bridge) is associated with the prefabricated factory of the 1850's, the type with monotonously repetitious tiers of cast-iron columns (but wooden beams), and large windows designed to admit every possible glint of daylight that could be induced through the smoke-laden atmosphere provided by the great chimneys atop the spidery structure. The South was not blessed with such an edifice; its architecture was restricted to "Greek plantation houses, courthouses, banks and capitols," and everyone but the "regnant slave-owners . . . was pushed into the squalor of the shack." Such a sharp distinction is news as startling to a whole school of architectural historians of the author's generation as it will be to those archeologists of the future dipping into the book for a glimpse of the architecture of the American nation.

In the first eight (out of eighteen) chapters, *American Building* presents an historical background for the discussion of contemporary architectural theory which occupies the larger part of the book. In Chapter Five the author pauses to take up a British and a French structure along with an American one. The key sentence runs: "The nineteenth century saw three great developments in structural theory: the enclosure of great areas in the Crystal Palace; the spanning of great voids in the Brooklyn Bridge; and the reaching of great heights in the Eiffel Tower." Next we come upon a chapter entitled "The Great Victorians," in which begins a discussion—continued later—of the Chicago Titans, Richardson, Sullivan and Wright, and the originators of the skyscraper. The author has illusions about the early use of steel. He attributes to Richardson prematurely the use of "steel frames" and mentions "LeBaron Jenney's genuine steel cage." The first is fictitious; and Jenney built frames mostly of wrought iron or cast iron, and used only a few Bessemer steel beams.

In the last ten chapters, the author meets architecture on his own terms, and consequently

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the discussion stands on firmer ground. The characterization of the properties and uses to which various materials can be put constitutes informative reading. The same is true for the chapters on air conditioning and city atmosphere, complete with statistical data, and carries through the discussion on lighting and fenestration, sound and acoustics, equipment and conveniences, environment both in and of the house, planning in a wide range of aspects, the production of buildings including prefabrication, and the matter of taste which, when bad, is claimed to be the fault of the designer rather than of the purchasing public. Architecture, however, is considered coldly, sociologically, mechanistically. *American Building* promotes the efficiency of architecture; but it has little to offer on the friendly, esthetic, human and appealing side.

One regrets, in the inclusion of so much material, that there have been noticeable oversights. Domestic architecture is conspicuously brushed past in proportion to the importance it plays in our daily lives; early American communal building is practically ignored; there is no mention of the balloon frame; and certain types of commercial structures are overlooked. No credit is given to the peoples who originally conceived and used principles that are presented as of modern American origin, reference being made to the orientation of cities with regard to prevailing winds, consciously utilized in the Indus Valley as early as 4,000 years ago; or to the matter of flexible planning, depending upon skeletal construction, an important factor in Chinese architecture for at least the last 3,500 years; or the use of metal-pipe plumbing handed down from ancient Egypt. The reviewer suggests that it was the romantics, whom the author scoffs, who endowed our architecture with much that is worthwhile. Downing, for instance, was not aiming his cherished designs at "bankers who wanted to play at country gentlemen" but rather emphasized that his buildings were specially conceived for farmers, country clergymen or permanent rural residents, that they might have something better for homes than the "poor and tasteless temples" prevalent in his day. It will be recalled that Downing presented the idea of flush toilets and such things in his books too, but that to him a home was something infinitely greater than a technical laboratory; and he has numerous spiritual descendants who uphold the opinion that there are dimensions to houses "beyond physical performance" other than the only one recognized by the author of *American Building*—namely "sentiment," or attachment to past styles.

Several factual corrections should be noted: Samuel McIntire was born among, built for, and was buried with the shipping gentry of Salem, not Portsmouth; and the names of Mills and Latrobe could hardly have become "famous"

in New York City with only the proposal for an elevated railroad and a consultation on drainage to their credit. McKim's partner was Mead, not Meade, and McComb's was Mangin, not Magnin. Latrobe studied with the eighteenth-century British architect, Samuel Pepys Cockerell, not the seventeenth-century diarist of the first two names. The man for whom Longwood at Natchez was built was Haller Nutt rather than William. Mills, after the age of sixty-five, was in charge of repairs on the Capitol and drew plans for a Greek-cross enlargement that was not executed; but he was by no means the designer of that building. Queen Victoria did not choose either the style or the architect for the Houses of Parliament; these were in the hands of a Parliamentary Committee. McKim's best known financier-patron was Pierpont Morgan instead of Tiffany. Currier and Ives prints are not engravings. And the 1900-1933 period could not have been termed an architectural "wasteland" had the author taken into account the exquisite work produced on the West Coast, if none other than that of Greene and Greene.

CLAY LANCASTER
Columbia University

***The Art of India and Pakistan*, edited by Sir Leigh Ashton, New York, Coward-McCann, 1950. 291 pp., 276 plates + 8 in color. \$15.**

This volume on the art of India and Pakistan, edited by Sir Leigh Ashton, brings to the American public a rare opportunity to see some of the splendid examples of art displayed at the Royal Academy Exhibition in London in 1947-48. With eight color plates and one hundred and fifty-two monochromes, the book presents a wide range of materials to those who already know the grandeur and beauty of Indian art; and for those who hope to reach some understanding of modern India and Pakistan through their past achievements, it will serve as an exciting introduction.

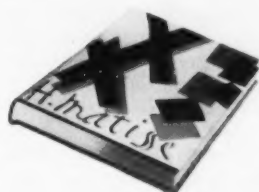
The authors of the text are authorities in their respective fields. K. de B. Codrington has distinguished himself in his lectures and books on Indian sculpture, Basil Gray is noted for his numerous studies in Persian and Indian painting, as is John Irwin for his research in the textiles and minor arts.

For the beginner, Mr. Irwin's section will be particularly informative, not only because it deals with arts which have been less discussed in the past, but also because it is written with clarity and cohesion. He, more than the others, seems to have done his part with the catalogue's readers, rather than the exhibition, in mind.

Codrington and Gray are prone to refer to objects which the reader knows nothing about, for they mention things not illustrated in this volume to buttress some of their strongest arguments. To follow them with real enjoyment, one



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should have access to a great library, where one could consult the numerous books and articles referred to by them. Their sections, written for scholars and students rather than for the general public, assume that the reader is aware of controversial points and discuss them at length.

In Codrington's introduction to sculpture this tends to produce an unevenness really regrettable, for he entirely neglects the medieval field. One would prefer that he had said less about the reaction of Englishmen to oriental art and more about the objects themselves and essential background materials. He approaches his subject from the point of view of the European to whom "classical" can refer only to the Greco-Roman world. To lovers of Indian sculpture everywhere, the first thought is that he must be speaking of the Gupta period, which is acknowledged to be a time of classic achievement in Indian arts. Once the reader realizes that he is not intent on presenting a well-balanced introduction, but concentrating on certain phases of development, he will enjoy the author's remarks on techniques and substances.

Like Codrington, Gray takes this opportunity to present his ideas on points that may seem obscure to the layman. Unless one knows the theories of Mehta, Goetz, Norman Brown and Khandalavala, one may not realize that Gray is rendering an important service in discussing

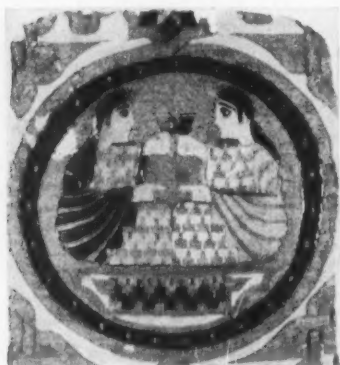
the origins of Rajput painting as he does here. Like Codrington, too, Gray deprives the reader of an adequate basis for judging the merits of his arguments, for illustrations of some key monuments are omitted. It is tantalizing to read, for instance, that No. 865 is "one of the most beautiful drawings in the exhibition," and look in vain for it among the plates.

All the authors, however, have done a painstaking job in the descriptive passages on the plates and in the bibliography. To the serious student, this is of inestimable value.

Everyone will enjoy the beauty of the plates, but one's pleasure is diminished by the arrangement of reference numbers. The reader has to go to considerable trouble to find out whether there is an illustration of the piece being discussed. It would also have been helpful to the layman to have included a map, for many of the sites are *terra incognita* to those who approach the art of India without knowing its geography.

For the artist, the student, the specialist and the general reader who hopes to widen his horizon, this book will offer much that is stimulating and challenging. To the editor and authors must go the thanks of all who were unable to attend the exhibition; this permanent record of it is indeed a consolation and a delight.

JANE GASTON MAHLER
Columbia University



Drinking Girls, Hispano-Moresque silk and gold tapestry, 12th-13th c., from Adèle C. Weibel, *Two Thousand Years of Textiles*

Latest Books Received

- Berenson, Bernard, *RUMOR AND REFLECTION*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1952. ix + 461 pp. \$6.
 Eley, Vincent, *A MONK AT THE POTTER'S WHEEL*, preface by Bernard Rackham, London, Edmund Ward (distributed by British Book Centre), 1952. 120 pp. + 57 plates. \$4.75.
 Ford, Alice, *AUDUBON'S BUTTERFLIES — MOTHS — AND OTHER STUDIES*, London and New York, Studio Publications and Thomas Y. Crowell, 1952. 120 pp., 43 black-and-white illus. + 24 color plates. \$5.75.
 Lipman, Jean, *AMERICAN FOLK DECORATION*, with

practical instruction by Eve Meulendyke, New York, Oxford, 1951. 163 pp., 181 illus. + 4 color plates. \$10.

Maritain, Jacques, *GEORGE ROUAULT* (Library of Great Painters Portfolio Edition), New York, Abrams, 1952. 22 pp. + 15 black-and-white illus. + 9 color plates. \$1.50.

O'Malley, Charles D., and J. B. de C. M. Saunders, *LEONARDO DA VINCI ON THE HUMAN BODY*, New York, Henry Schuman, 1952. 506 pp. + frontispiece + 215 illus. \$25.

Stoddard, Whitney S., *THE WEST PORTALS OF SAINT-DENIS AND CHARTRES*, Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University, 1952. 64 pp. + 38 unbound plates. \$20.

Struppeck, Jules, *THE CREATION OF SCULPTURE*, New York, Henry Holt, 1952. 260 pp. incl. 277 illus. \$6.95; college edition \$5.25.

Verzocchi, Giuseppe, *IL LAVORO NELLA PITTURA ITALIANA D'OGGI*, Milan, Raccolte Verzocchi, 1950. 463 pp. incl. 72 color plates.

Wechsler, Herman J., *FRENCH IMPRESSIONISTS* (Library of Great Painters Portfolio Edition), New York, Abrams, 1952. 24 pp., 4 black-and-white + 9 color plates. \$1.50.

Weibel, Adèle C., *TWO THOUSAND YEARS OF TEXTILES*, New York, Pantheon (published for the Detroit Institute of Arts), 1952. 167 pp. + 256 plates, 8 in color. \$20.

Werner, Alfred, *MAURICE UTRILLO* (Library of Great Painters Portfolio Edition), New York, Abrams, 1952. 24 pp., 4 black-and-white illus. + 9 color plates. \$1.50.

Williamson, Hugh Ross, *SIR WALTER RALEIGH*, New York, Macmillan, 1952. 215 pp. \$2.50.

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